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ABSTRACT

The monograph reports on a year-long ethnographic study of a program for deaf students, DeafCAN (College Access Network) at Laney College, a community college in Oakland, California. During the 1988-89 year of observation, the program offered six specially designed courses, a daily lab hour, tutoring services, and a women's support/rap group. The study was designed to describe the program, evaluate the program, and construct a program model for dissemination. The study particularly looked at: the effects of the program on the mental health of the 12 new students, bilingualism and the use of American Sign Language and English, student goals, and DeafCAN as a family. Extensive tape recordings (video and audio) of classroom and informal settings provided the data for analysis. Individual chapters of the report address the following: the setting; the DeafCAN program; the DeafCAN staff; staff meetings; DeafCAN students; students' language attitudes; students' social networks; student writing samples; underlying themes in the DeafCAN program; the impact of DeafCAN on students' mental health; student goals; DeafCAN as a bilingual/bicultural program; DeafCAN as a family; relationships between students and staff; and contact between deaf and hearing cultures. Extensive quotes and anecdotal accounts are included in the report. (DB)

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A Year in the Life of DeafCAN:

Minority Deaf Students in a Community College

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This is the report of a detailed inquiry into a program for Deaf students, known as *DeafCAN*, at a community college in Oakland, California. The purpose of our study was threefold: 1) to produce a highly detailed description of the program; 2) to produce a program evaluation; 3) to construct a program model for dissemination where new programs might be developed. In order to collect data for the study of *DeafCAN*, we chose to adopt the method, common to anthropologists, known as ethnography. The use of ethnographic methods in educational settings has become increasingly popular in recent years (Spindler 1982), in spite of the resistance of some scientists to qualitative research.

Perhaps the best way to explain what is entailed in an ethnographic inquiry is to summarize what Spindler (op. cit. pp. 6-7) lists as the criteria for a good ethnography of schooling. Together, these criteria provide the operational definition we used in performing the research to be described below:

1. Observations are contextualized. In other words the significance of events is seen in the framework of the immediate setting but may be pursued into contexts beyond

2. Hypotheses and research questions emerge as the study proceeds in the selected setting.

3. Observation is prolonged and repetitive.

4. The participants' views are brought out by inferences from observation, interviews and other eliciting techniques where necessary.

5. A major task is to understand what sociocultural knowledge the participants bring to the social setting under study.

6. Instruments, codes, schedules, questionnaires, agenda for interviews, etc. are generated in the field as a result of observation and ethnographic inquiry.

7. Some of the sociocultural knowledge affecting behavior and communication is implicit or tacit, not known to some and only ambiguously to others. A significant task of ethnography is to make explicit what is implicit and tacit to informants and participants.

8. Inquiry and observation must disturb the processes being studied as little as possible.

9. Informants have the cultural knowledge and responses in interviews should not be predetermined by the kinds of questions asked. Answers should unfold naturally.

10. Any form of technical device that will enable the collection of live data will be used, such as cameras, audiotapes, and videotapes.

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With these criteria as a guideline, we set about the task of collecting the data that would enable us to write an ethnography of the *DeafCAN* program. The data were to consist of videotaped classroom observations recorded over a full academic year; videotaped observations of certain non-classroom events such as staff meetings, student gatherings, informal comings-and-goings; taped interviews with staff and students at the beginning and end of the year; written classroom materials of all kinds; student records; and teachers' grade notes and student evaluations. An additional source of data was to come from a series of three-hour meetings with staff where selections of classroom observation videotapes were reviewed, reacted to, and discussed.

A hearing, female researcher was assigned as classroom observer, and all teaching staff, including the counselor, were given a small stipend for their participation in the data collection. The researcher was already known to some of the staff, is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL), and was trained in both language and literacy education, as well as educational research. In all, just over seventy hours of classroom observation were videotaped, including staff meetings, the *DeafCAN* business office, and meetings of a women's group. These tapes were subsequently reviewed by the researcher, who made running notes that could be used for the construction of the ethnography. Two sets of interviews were conducted at the beginning and end of the academic year. Signed interviews were recorded on video, spoken interviews on audiotape. Interviews with deaf informants were subsequently translated into English. Quotations that appear in the report are therefore English translations of comments expressed originally in ASL.

In the spirit of ethnographic inquiry, we began without preconceived hypotheses or research questions (see 2. above), but were guided to look for information on the following themes:

1. The effects of the program on the students' mental health.

2. Bilingualism and the use of American Sign Language and English.

3. Student goals

4. *DeafCAN* as a family.

As a Research and Training Center on the Mental Health Rehabilitation of Individuals with Deafness, we are especially interested in the role that programs play in participants' mental health and personal wellbeing. In a way, we look at the *DeafCAN* program as an intervention for individuals with mental health problems, since the population from which these students are drawn is overrepresented in mental health programs and agencies. The other themes were already on the agenda largely because of advance information about the program. One of the reasons *DeafCAN* had come to our attention was because the teachers espoused a self-described "bilingual-bicultural" approach. Staff included both deaf and hearing men and women with a reputation for creating a mutually supportive environment and for motivating and holding on to their students, who come from a variety of disadvantaged backgrounds and have a wide range of reasons for enrolling in the program.

This report is structured as a series of portraits of the staff and certain students followed over the course of one school year, interspersed with some general discursive comments whose purpose is to identify themes that link the individual portraits together. After an initial description of *DeafCAN*'s educational and geographic setting there follows a detailed study of the individual instructors, including their classroom styles, their opinions of the program and their students, and their reactions to videotapes of the program in action. Then, the progress of ten students is described in close-up in ten individual case studies, using data from observation, interviews, teacher reports, and from their own written work. Finally, the results of the investigation are summarized with particular focus on the four themes identified above, but including others that emerged during the investigation.

Definitions

During the course of this report we make reference to a number of things related to the language, education, and culture of Deaf people. For readers who may not be familiar with deafness-related concepts and institutions, we offer the following definitions and descriptions:

Sign Language and Sign Systems

American Sign Language (ASL) is a natural, visual-gestural language used by many Deaf people in the United States and Canada. It is only in the last 20 years or so that linguists have shown ASL to be a fully developed language with its own grammar and structure distinct from English. ASL has no written form, and is primarily used in social interaction, although it can be used in any setting. Sometimes it is necessary to transcribe an ASL utterance, in which case the ASL signs are written down using English words or *glosses*, with added diacritical marks, underlining, or other conventions to convey as closely as possible the exact language of the signer.

Signing Exact English (SEE1), Seeing Essential English (SEE2), Signed English, Linguistics of Visual English (LOVE), are some of the most widely used artificial signing codes of English that have been developed since the move from oralism has encouraged the use of signs in schools and programs for deaf children. These systems, often referred to collectively as MCE (manually coded English, or signed English) borrow ASL signs for nouns and verbs and add new signs for English morphemes that are not represented in ASL. Without using facial expressions, eye gaze, or body position, these signs are then presented in English word order as signed representations of spoken English. In schools where one or other of these systems is used, the hearing teachers almost always speak and sign at the same time in a method of delivery known as *Simultaneous Communication*, sometimes referred to as *Simcom* for short. In some programs, teachers are now being trained to add some ASL prosody to their signs to make them more fluid and less stilted, and thus more interesting for the observer.

Educational Alternatives for Deaf Children

Many deaf children are educated in state or private residential schools for the deaf, either as day students or in residence. Every state has at least one residential school, and they currently serve about one sixth of the total population of deaf school-aged children in the United States. Most students are enrolled in public day classes within regular schools. Many of these students are partially mainstreamed in regular classes with hearing children, while the rest of the day they spend in special classes with other deaf children. In addition, there is a smaller number of public and private day schools for deaf children.

Schools and programs vary in the kind of communication philosophy they espouse. In oral programs the teachers and students do not sign, and the emphasis is entirely on speech reading, amplification, and speech production. In Total Communication programs teachers sign and speak at the same time, using one of a number of specially devised sign systems for representing spoken

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English manually. Some programs use a system called Cued Speech, where speakers add signals which are designed to enhance the accuracy of lipreading. A small number of programs use fingerspelling exclusively (known as the Rochester Method). Students who are mainstreamed into regular classrooms may be accompanied by a sign language interpreter, who (it is hoped) will use whatever kind of signing the student requests. The inadequacy of support services for mainstreamed Deaf children is a widespread problem, and interpreting services are the focus of the majority of complaints. Often there are not enough interpreters to cover the needs of all the students, and the majority of those working in that role are not really qualified, much less certified. It certainly cannot be assumed, therefore, that the communication needs of deaf students are being met.

Deaf Culture

Increasingly people are viewing deafness less a disability and more as a cultural phenomenon. Many Deaf people grow up, live, and sometimes work with other Deaf people. They are members of a Deaf community with their own social events, newspapers, clubs, sporting activities, and their own language, ASL. Use of ASL is the single most important defining feature of membership in the Deaf community. Social anthropologists and sociologists see the Deaf community as a separate culture or sub-culture, with its own norms for interacting and behaving, and a set of mores and values which are slightly different from those found in hearing cultures. Of course there are regional and ethnic differences among the Deaf community, just as there are among the hearing population. Some Deaf people do not become members of the Deaf community, either through choice, because they are isolated from other Deaf people, because they do not know ASL, because they are hard-of-hearing rather than Deaf, or because they became Deaf later in life.

CHAPTER TWO

The Setting

The *DeafCAN* (College Access Network) program has evolved slowly over the course of eight years at Laney College in Oakland, California. Laney is one of several community colleges maintained by the Peralta district administration in Northern California. It offers two-year training programs and Associate of Arts degrees in many trades and technical fields, as well as coursework which may be applied toward entrance requirements or higher degrees at other colleges and universities. The college is located in downtown Oakland on the border of the city's Chinatown district. The majority of the college's student population is Black, Hispanic and Asian.

The impetus for *DeafCAN* came in 1980, when two Deaf students in a regular English class at the college seemed unable to make progress. According to the teacher, Smokey Wilson, she began to realize the unique nature of the students' native language (ASL), and the difficulties it posed to the learning of English. From her attempts to "reach these students and devise new ways of teaching them" came the seed for the *DeafCAN* program. Dr. Wilson's attempts became a collaboration with Eliot Helman, who was the Deaf Services coordinator and a sign language interpreter at the college. By 1984 their efforts to devise new ways to teach Deaf students in the community college setting had evolved into a special English and math class comprised only of Deaf students. Although he individual classes were listed in the College's class schedule, *DeafCAN* had no official status as a program. These classes proceeded and developed by trial and error and without special funding. By the start of the UCCD study in 1988, the program had grown to serve almost fifty students, with a staff of seven part-time and volunteer teachers, teacher assistants, and tutors. Of the seven, five are Deaf and three are of Hispanic or Asian descent. Instructors for the *DeafCAN* program have Master's or Doctoral degrees and are credentialed to teach in the community college system. However, several staff members serve as teachers, conducting small groups, even though they have been hired officially as "teacher assistants" and are not fully certified or credentialed. The director's rationale is that they will continue their education and eventually become fully qualified as teachers.

The program curriculum includes courses in English, math, computer literacy, and Deaf culture, all of which are taught in American Sign Language. The program was described by staff in their conversations with us as having a bilingual/bicultural approach to the teaching of English and other subject matter. The courses are designed for the special needs of Deaf students and are, according to one of the staff, "multi-leveled, allowing students flexibility within and among classes." Depending on skill levels and background, students may be programmed into regular classes at the college or at other institutions. The Deaf Services office provides support services for mainstreamed students such as interpreters, notetakers and tutors. *DeafCAN* and Deaf Services work very closely to provide students with an education suited to their individual needs. Many students mainstream into Project Bridge classes as an intermediary step. These are "basic skills" classes in English and math for hearing students.

Funding for the program is tenuous at best, and salaries for staff members are often "borrowed" from other funds, programs or grants, leaving *DeafCAN* constantly fighting to maintain itself. According to staff, every year the program "serves a larger number of students, yet the number of staff and available support remains the same." Although spoken support has been offered by the college's administration, no specific funds or recognized position have been created to secure the *DeafCAN* program a permanent, official place in the college.

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Despite this, *DeafCAN* struggled on with more students enrolling each year and a drop-out rate below 20% over the three years previous to the present study. The program is administered in an office space shared with Deaf Services (who manage interpreter, notetaker, and tutoring services), consisting of a small reception area, and four partitioned cubicles for staff office and meeting space and student tutoring. Two classrooms adjacent to the office are used for all *DeafCAN* classes.

The student population of *DeafCAN* is reflective of the larger college's demography. Mostly minorities and foreign-born, many of the students have not been successful in their previous school experiences. Traditionally, these are the students who fall through the cracks in most educational institutions, and suffer the psychological and economic consequences of having limited or no access to post-secondary education.

The main goal of the program as stated by *DeafCAN* staff in initial interviews is to help students fulfill their own inner agenda for being.in school. Staff interpret this agenda to include helping students "succeed in an academic environment, master English at some level, develop a positive self-image as a life-long learner, or become proficient in a vocation or trade." The commitment to student satisfaction and success is central to the goals of the program, as described by the staff in these interviews. Also included as a goal is the ability to "function in a bicultural/bilingual environment." The self-described bilingual/bicultural nature of the program is seen by staff as being prerequisite to that ability.

The DeafCAN Program

During the 1988-89 year of observation for the UCCD Project, the program offered six specially designed courses, a daily lab hour, tutoring services, and a women's support/rap group. The basic reading course in English was held twice weekly for sessions of 1 1/2 hours on each day, and offered in both fall and spring semesters. The class was broken down into three sections, each taught by one or more staff members. Students were placed in a section based on their ability levels, as determined from initial entry interviews and placement tests, and, as instructor Ethan Stein put it, "where they fit in best," in relation to their communication styles.

The *math* course was also taught twice a week for sessions of an hour and a half each during both semesters. The class was designed as a self-paced lab for the first hour, where students worked independently, with one another, and with tutors, through a math text/workbook. Students proceed through different levels of work from basic arithmetic to pre-algebra. The last half-hour of the session was devoted to the collaborative solving and discussion of a word problem by the class.

A *computer literacy preparatory* course was offered twice weekly for sessions of two hours during both semesters. The class was designed to provide experience and background information for understanding how computers work and the basics of running simple programs. It consisted of lecture, lab work (in the main college's computer lab), and the completion of worksheets and homework assignments from a textbook.

The *basic English writing* course was held for three hours in the evening, once each week. This class was divided into three sections like the *basic reading* class and was offered during both semesters.

The *Deaf culture* class was held twice weekly for sessions of an hour and a half each during the spring semester only. The class was taught using a combination of lecture, film, videotape and text to cover information on the history of American Sign Language and of Deaf people and Deaf culture. Also included were materials and coursework concerning Deaf theater arts, poetry and folklore.

An *Orientation to College* course was offered for nine weeks during the spring semester, meeting weekly for an hour. The class introduced students to the services available to them on campus and how to use them (e.g., financial assistance, tutors, interpreters), as well as discussing career options and helping to assess and develop study skills.

A *daily lab* class was held for one hour each day where students could receive assistance from staff members and peers with schoolwork from any of their *DeafCAN* or mainstream classes.

During the spring semester a *support/rap group* was formed for female students. The group was led by three staff members from the program; a hearing counselor, a Deaf teacher, and a Deaf tutor. The group met for an hour-and-a-half each week and helped students learn problem solving skills, discuss and get support for problems they were having in school and their private lives, and helped them establish a support network among their peers, facilitated by the group leaders.

All of the *DeafCAN* classes and the lab were held in two large rooms adjacent to the Deaf Services office. The rooms were divided up into different areas to accommodate the various sections of the English writing and reading classes. The women's support/rap group was held in a small meeting room in the Student Union building on campus. The Deaf culture class had its sessions in the basement of the college library when viewing films or videotapes. Tutoring sessions and an occasional session of one section of the evening writing class were held in a small partitioned area in the back of the Deaf Services office. Class size varied from an average 4-10 students in each of the sections of the reading and writing classes, to 15-20 students in the Deaf culture class, and 10-12 in the math and computer literacy classes.

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CHAPTER THREE

The DeafCAN Staff

In the first year of the project, formal interviews with staff members were conducted just before the beginning of the school year and at its end. The following profiles of individual staff members have been constructed from these interview data and from reports on observational data collected in the classrooms and at staff meetings. These profiles serve to highlight some aspects of staff members' attitudes, teaching styles, perceptions, backgrounds and expectations for the students and the *DeafCAN* program in general.

David Stubbs

David Stubbs is a white Deaf man in his early 40s. His background and training are in theater, in which he holds a Doctoral Degree. Dr. Stubbs is an accomplished actor, writer and teacher. Over the course of the year he taught both semesters of the weekly English writing course and a second semester course in Deaf culture.

The writing class was held weekly from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday evenings. Generally the class convened as a whole group and later would break off into three separate groups led by Dr. Stubbs and two of the other teachers. During the time when the whole group met, Dr. Stubbs often began the class with some type of relaxation exercise in which other staff members and all students would participate. Sometimes these exercises were intended as an ice-breaker or to make students more comfortable. For example, one September evening Stubbs led them in a relaxation/visualization exercise to "a favorite place," before breaking off into their respective groups with the other two writing teachers. On one occasion in February, Dr. Stubbs had the group all take a turn "telling about something that had happened during the previous week that they felt positive about ..." in order to "energize" them for class, after a tiring day. Before Christmas in December, Stubbs began with having students go around the room "telling what they were looking forward to over the upcoming holidays."

At other times, the same technique was employed as a way of getting students to discuss something more important, such as their language attitudes, which was then developed into a full-blown classroom activity. For example, on two occasions in the Fall, after the initial relaxation portion of the exercise, Dr. Stubbs had students recalling their negative associations with learning English. These associations were later discussed in class and Stubbs tried to dispel the negative connotations of prior academic experiences in learning English.

Before leaving to lead their sections of class, the other two teachers often assisted Dr. Stubbs. They would help him explain or illustrate a point to the students through role play or by demonstrating an idea or technique. For instance, early in the year when Stubbs was describing how to do the relaxation exercise, Betty Walton, one of the other teachers, sat in a chair in front of the class and went through the paces of the exercise as an example for the students to follow. At other times the teachers helped individual students in the larger group. For example, during one of the sessions focusing on negative associations with trying to learn English, Stubbs had students write down the negative thoughts and then re-write them as more positive statements. After the lecture/discussion, both Ms. Walton and Mr. Valdez served as aides, going from student to student to clarify and help with the assignment. In other instances, Mr. Valdez was called upon to tell personal narratives that further clarified points addressed by Dr. Stubbs in his lectures, or, as in a class during the Spring of 1989, to help rehearse the students in English idioms being taught by Dr. Stubbs. Occasionally, Mr. Valdez performed aide-like tasks, distributing papers or getting copies of handouts for Dr. Stubbs before assuming the role of teacher when the writing class broke off into its assigned groups. When Dr. Stubbs was ill or away Mr. Valdez generally took over the class.

In most of his lectures Dr. Stubbs' peppered his signed English with metaphors and idiomatic phrases. During the first semester of the writing class, within the larger group, his lectures and activities often focused on abstract issues such as language attitudes. When the class broke up into its small groups Dr. Stubbs generally taught and reviewed English grammar, including English verb conjugations, idioms, phrases, and sentence construction. In one class meeting in the fall we see Dr. Stubbs reviewing his groups' answers to grammar exercises assigned for homework from the previous class. He sits in a circle with the students, each of whom takes a turn presenting an answer and posing questions. There is a good deal of discussion among the group as Stubbs explains the reasons behind the correct answers in considerable detail. The mood is amiable and pleasant and Dr. Stubbs appears comfortable and confident in his role as facilitator and teacher. He acts as the one who has the answers and can explain them.

During the second semester of the writing class, Stubbs' and Valdez's sections convened to learn and practice using English idioms. Additionally, all three sections met for a half-hour to practice conversational writing with hearing volunteer partners. After the idiom practice, students returned to their original groups to work on English grammar exercises and discussion.
For the combined sections, Dr. Stubbs provided definitions in ASL for the English idioms, and discussed with the class the correct contexts for their usage. Starting in mid-February, Stubbs defined an idiom ("linking words together to give them an entirely different meaning than if they are used on their own") and then, over several sessions, introduced a list of English idioms, modeling for students the process of translation into ASL. Again, Mr. Valdez served as assistant to the larger group, helping Stubbs by illustrating his points, or creating little skits to play out the meaning of different idioms.

In the second semester Deaf Culture class Dr. Stubbs used lecture, discussion, video, textbook, and various assignments to teach students about Deaf history, language issues, cultural issues, Deaf theater and Deaf art. These lectures were full of content and background information not often present in other classes. For example, one day early in 1989, using a mixture of lecture-with-discussion and film, he covered the history of Deaf education, the French revolution, and language change over time. He used the films (a lecture by Deaf cultural historian and linguist Ben Bahan, and archival footage of a lecture by a Deaf man about the preservation of sign language in 1915) both to inform and provoke discussion about the ideas he was teaching. On another day he helped bring to life information from the textbook on the history of Deaf schools and teachers, expanding on it, pulling students into the material through discussions, and tying it into current debates such as that over the mainstreaming of Deaf students. Dr. Stubbs used the information in the textbook (*Deaf Heritage* by Jack Gannon), building lessons around it and directly relating student assignments to the material and concepts covered in the lectures and discussions. Though students seemed generally engaged in the material, some of them appeared to get lost or became intimidated by Dr. Stubbs' assignments, or his lectures. When this occurred, they tended to look to Mr. Valdez as a sort of intermediary or translator between them and Dr. Stubbs. Sometimes, the better students took on that role themselves. For example, during a class in February, after viewing films and attending to a lecture and discussion about historical changes in the structure of ASL, Stubbs tells the students to break into groups and, using an old dictionary of signs, "... develop a theory about how sign language has changed" [over the years]. Despite the fact that students were able to identify differences in ASL signs from the 1915 film they had watched, many of them appeared bewildered by Stubbs' directive and ended up explaining to one another how to do the assignment, or seeking help from Mr. Valdez. Similar patterns occurred after a quiz and on an occasion when students were assigned to give a presentation to fellow class members related to a reading from the text. Many of these same students were lost during Stubbs' presentation of the material, often in signed English and in a lecture format. On different occasions throughout the year, students interpreted some of Stubbs' information for one another during the lecture. It seemed sometimes that Dr. Stubbs had an unrealistic expectation of his students' ability to perform school tasks. After the presentation assignment in the same February class, about one fourth of the students appeared unclear as to how to proceed. Mr. Valdez took them all aside and explained, step by step, how to go about it.

Topics in Dr. Stubbs' Deaf culture classes were often politicized or used to raise consciousness (as is often a goal in minority history/studies classes). In one lecture he described the historical oppression of Deaf people, detailing how signs were banished in education, the historic imposition of the oral method in Deaf education, and the systematic exclusion of Deaf teachers. He tied these issues in with current affairs, imploring students to be active politically. In a subsequent class, following a lecture on the declining numbers of Deaf teachers over the years, he described a protest rally about to take place in the State's capital against the mainstreaming of Deaf students. Later that spring, he described the use of hearing actors to portray Deaf characters in movies and on television and then informed them of a rally protesting that very issue. He also attempted some consciousness raising through lectures that outlined the accomplishments of Deaf people, including Deaf inventors. During one of these, a student commented in awe that she "... thought all inventors were hearing."

Dr Stubbs' linguistic sophistication is evident in the way he presents language issues in class. Other teachers might focus on some basic differences between ASL and English, but he tends to go into greater detail, often discussing some of the more subtle nuances of grammar or use. For example, during one Deaf culture class in late spring, Stubbs presented videotaped examples of sign language variations, requiring students to identify different features, and discuss the contexts of their use. In the same class, after showing a videotape of performance pieces by the National Theater of the Deaf, Dr. Stubbs initiated discussion about why the performers made the language choices they did, and in so doing elicited language attitudes from the students and discussed language attitudes in general. During another Deaf culture class, Stubbs conducted a lecture and discussion on the formation and use of ASL classifiers.

Dr. Stubbs' is different from the other Deaf teachers both in his command of English (which he often uses in preference to ASL, although he is equally fluent in both), and in his attitudes toward language. When Stubbs engaged his students in discussion, it was often on a broader level, covering a greater variety of topics and concepts than the students experienced in the other classes. For example, in a discussion about the nature of theater, he worked with the students to try and define the concept of theater, provoking them to build arguments in defense of their positions, urging them to think and argue in an academic manner. Another time he initiated a metalinguistic discussion on certain features of ASL, reaching quite a high level of abstraction. His assignments were frequently based on text, or required essay- or report-writing skills, or a knowledge of how to perform academic tasks.

Dr. Stubbs is an experienced teacher with fairly traditional views of how students should behave

Although the notion of Deaf solidarity forms a message that runs throughout his classes, he does not try to be their pal, but their teacher. This stance had different effects on different students. Some were unable to understand him or were intimidated by his technique. These students usually ended up having other students interpret and explain, or they relied on Mr. Valdez to serve this function. The type of student who was more academically minded, or who had experience in higher education tended to do better in Dr. Stubbs' classes. These issues are explored in more detail in chapter five.

In the initial project interview in August, 1988 Dr. Stubbs talks about the two parts of the program-- Deaf Services and *DeafCAN*. He describes *DeafCAN* in terms of the classes offered and its ASL/English emphasis, and gives an overview of the program as a whole. He characterizes the students as "about a third foreign born, a third from residential schools, and a third from mainstream schools". Their aim, he maintained, was to help the foreign-born adjust to the new language(s) and culture(s). Also, they want the residential school students to become "more culturally adjusted and more open to career possibilities", with the idea that they will "discover more of their career potential and adjust to the hearing world." He describes the mainstream students as "the most difficult-- often more than the foreign-born ..." because their cultural perspectives are "messed up" and they're not often familiar with "successful Deaf adults or ASL," nor are they "proficient in either ASL or English." Stubbs finds them lacking in awareness of what they need to learn in order to communicate effectively.

He describes the type of staff they look for as "reasonably bilingual," having a positive concept of Deaf people, culture and ASL, and willing to work with a variety of communication needs and styles. He says that because of the commitment they have to hiring minority staff, and the fact that Gallaudet "snaps up" those ethnic minority members who are properly qualified to teach or counsel, they hire people at Laney who "may not be fully qualified or credentialed ... and hire them as teaching assistants in hopes that they will continue their education and become fully credentialed eventually."

Early in the school year Stubbs felt that the most important thing in the program was enabling the student "to ultimately be able to function in a bicultural environment-- to have English language skills and good self-esteem." He felt the student's "inner psychological perspective on school and learning" were critical, and that it was important for the student to become "a lifelong learner."

He described three students he thought of as successful. One, from Indonesia, overcame cultural and linguistic barriers and went through the whole program in *DeafCAN* with plans to go to Gallaudet. A second was from Viet Nam, had no formal schooling, almost no communication skills and no understanding of print. Since learning SEE signs here, he was, Stubbs felt, currently functioning better and beginning to derive meaning from text. The other student went through the *DeafCAN* program, on to *Project Bridge*, then into mainstream classes majoring in psychology.

He felt that the bilingual focus, recruitment of minority staff members, and "family" attitude was what made *DeafCAN* special as a program. In his second conversation with us, Stubbs described the *DeafCAN* program as trying to "provide the students with a bilingual education through various strategies," outlining how this was achieved in different classes. He also pointed to the women's group and other support and services that helped students become more "independent learners." Stubbs felt that the program's accomplishments were to "turn students on" to education, and to keep them enrolled throughout the year.

Staff qualities that he felt were critical included being able to reflect the ethnic diversity of the students, acting as a "team player," having a grasp of the skills being taught, and being able to work independently. In reference to the financial and administrative difficulties he joked that they must also "be willing to earn very low pay, and should expect no permanent employment." Dr. Stubbs also expressed concern at several points in the interview over *DeafCAN*'s screening process for accepting students. He talked about the criteria they should use to decide if a student is "right" for the program, in order to avoid wasting everybody's time. He spoke of the "weak chain of command" administratively that leaves the program without any real solid support, undermines the program's position in the college, and creates uncertainties for the pool of interpreters who help the mainstreamed students. Another weakness he mentioned was lack of integration across classes and the continual re-creation of curricula each year rather than using what is already in place. This problem Stubbs attributed to the independence of staff coupled with lack of time to coordinate.

He described two "success stories" of the year. One student, Steve Atkins:

> "... showed up with this wild mess of hair ... a t-shirt full of holes ... looking like a street person. ... he didn't have any English sentence structure, things didn't make sense, he couldn't remember signs, he was just a mess. ... He wouldn't be a part of the class ... he was always using obscene language."

However through a combination of "confrontation, support, and scolding he finally turned around and now is one of the best students. He is not the same person at all."

Stubbs attributes this progress to Atkins having worked closely with deaf staff, and the development of mutual respect that resulted from this rapport. The other successful student was a "frustrated learner" with little patience and a very negative attitude towards the world in general, and his classmates in particular. Again, Stubbs explained this student's improvement in attitude as resulting from his "interrelations with adult models."

Stubbs would like to see *DeafCAN* do more politicking and get continued support for the program. He also talked about the development of a more "systematic" approach to teaching students, and having a more integrated and consistent curriculum. Students should be taught leadership and independent learning skills rather than learning "through osmosis" and depending on teachers for help.

Stubbs felt that the UCCD project forced staff members to think more clearly about their goals and "really take a look at what we mean by being ... a bilingual program". "I think it also helped us look harder at the way we interact with each other because we watched the videotapes ... saw how we act ... and [became more aware of] our own individual strengths and weaknesses ...". He ended the interview with a plea for more administrative support for the program. "... I feel like we're a flower in the desert, and there's been no rain for quite some time. It needs to rain."

Roy Valdez

Roy Valdez is a Deaf man of Mexican and American Indian descent in his mid 30's. His background and training are in film and photography, in which he holds an Associate of Arts degree. He has served as a counselor at a local agency assisting disabled and Deaf citizens, and was also employed as a printer. Over the course of the year he taught a section of the reading and writing classes, the spring semester of the computer literacy prep course, and assisted in all of the other classes and the noon lab.

In addition to teaching a section of the English reading and writing classes, Mr. Valdez co-taught parts of the math class and the combined group in the second semester writing course with Dr. Stubbs. He served more of an assistant's role in Dr. Stubbs' second semester Deaf culture class. Mr. Valdez is a native signer and has a gift for story-telling. Part of his teaching style is to make frequent use of his natural talent as a narrator. In both his own classes and those he assists in, Valdez spends a lot of time illustrating lectures and classroom discussion with personal narratives or mini-lectures that relate (sometimes only tangentially) to information being covered in class. For example, early in the year during a session of his reading class, while going over the answers to homework questions, Valdez attempted to clarify the meaning of the definite article *the*, from a phrase in the homework answers, "the United States." He draws a map of the Americas on the blackboard and lectures about the divisions between countries, states and provinces, bringing students into a discussion that involves naming the various countries. Following this he ties his talk back to the definite article by explaining which portion of the Americas it refers to. Valdez then continues the geography discussion, digressing into a discourse about language use in Canada, the derivation of the ASL sign for "French," and customs of the French people. Subsequently, he returns to the homework questions and the assigned reading from which they were taken. As is typical in this reading class, Mr. Valdez then helps students by answering questions about the assigned text, clarifying points, and opening up the assignment for discussion.

Later in the same class Mr. Valdez has his students take turns telling about a time when they felt like a "foreigner" coming into a new or uncomfortable environment, as a parallel to the assigned reading which concerned a newly arrived foreign visitor. After each student has a turn, Mr. Valdez tells his own narrative, which goes on at length and in much detail, about his experiences being a new (and broke) student, at Gallaudet University.

During a subsequent meeting of his reading class, Mr. Valdez gives a vocabulary quiz and corrects it on the spot. Then, in preparation for a reading assignment about first jobs, he has the students take turns telling about their first job experiences and then relates a story about his own first job experience. On another occasion, Mr. Valdez has students take turns translating written sentences they had done for a homework assignment into ASL and then critiques and discusses each student's rendition with the rest of the class. He asks students which language they find easier, and uses this as an opportunity to give a little lecture about the history of ASL, a brief history of the founding of America, oralism, and the great debate about sign language use in classrooms and the declining numbers of Deaf teachers.

In general, in his English reading classes, Mr. Valdez works from stories in assigned texts, poses questions for discussion, and provides explanations or clarifications to students about various English structures or word meanings. A constant addition to these exercises, however, are his narratives about events from his personal life, or short lectures intended to serve as vivid illustrations of the focal concept, or simply as background information. Mr. Valdez follows the same practice in other classes, too. For example, in a math class with teacher Wilbert Wang, the topic was timelines and Fahrenheit/Centigrade temperature scales. After the teacher had described the concept of *freezing point*, a student mentions being confused by a television news story about a sprinkler system freezing. Mr. Valdez comes up to the front of the class, explains to her what the sprinkler story was about, and then proceeds to give a personal account of an experience he had had when his hair froze in very cold weather. On various other occasions Mr. Valdez recounted stories from his life including losing his bank card at an automatic teller, accidently setting a fire as a child, getting around on public transport, problems with SSI payments, and his experiences at Gallaudet.

Mr. Valdez has a good rapport with students, they seem to enjoy his stories and jokes, and he puts them at ease with his easy-going style. He frequently jokes around and engages in social conversations as an equal. For example, in one noon lab Valdez is engaged in an active discussion on the latest accomplishments of football players and teams with several of the students.

As we have seen, Mr. Valdez serves mostly as an assistant in the Deaf culture class, recording student answers on the blackboard in a class discussion with Dr. Stubbs, going to the Deaf Services office to pick up question sheets and other materials, and making photocopies for Dr. Stubbs. His other role was as a sort of link between Stubbs and those students who had a hard time understanding him and who found it difficult to function in the more academic structure of Stubbs' class. Often Valdez would be called upon to interpret Stubbs' directives or re-explain assignments. In other classrooms Valdez acts more as a co-teacher rather than a teacher's aide.

When Mr. Valdez was present in a class, he typically answered questions and provided explanations to students about English grammar, word usage, and the like. He appeared comfortable up to a certain level of explanation, but sometimes he would give a non-committal response such as "English is just that way." Mr. Valdez went to great lengths to legitimize and support the use of ASL in the classroom. He spoke often in his classes about ASL's grammatical complexity being comparable to that of English, repeatedly making the point that ASL is **not** an "abbreviated form of English," but a bona fide language on its own. The structure and usage of that grammar were rarely discussed, however, even when the focus of a lesson was on translating between English text and ASL. For example, during a fall session of his reading class, students are taking turns rendering sentences from their texts into sign. Valdez encourages them to "sign it in ASL" and both he and the other students give feedback as to how to improve interpretations. They discuss and practice their renditions, and Mr. Valdez encourages discussion and feedback among students, but does not provide any grammatical or linguistic parameters by which to guide their interpretations. He shows what he wants them to do by example, giving them **his** signed interpretation of the sentences after the last student has taken a turn. As implied in Valdez's feedback, the guiding principle in this exercise seems to be trying to interpret the *meaning* of the English text into sign. He emphasizes that "the English way and the ASL way are different" but does not really explain exactly how they are different beyond identifying examples of each language, or via somewhat vague directives to "use more facial expression" [as a way of being more like ASL].

Mr. Valdez's teaching style relies heavily on his use of narratives and lengthy answers to some student questions, and/or explanations that serve as introductions to the mini-lectures he delivers during almost every class session. Occasionally, it appears that the narratives, the examples, the digressions, and the ubiquitous lengthy explanations, took precedence over the conveying of course content. For example, in a December math class, during a word problem discussion devoted to solving the question of how much money one would have to pay a landlord for first and last months' rent plus a deposit, Valdez helps students interpret the English wording of the problem. The discussion is lively, and as Valdez tries to direct students toward understanding and solving the problem (i.e. amount of rent x 2 + amount of deposit), one student comes out with exactly the right equation. Valdez attended to the student's answer, but chose to continue, telling the class that he would explain to them "how it works" despite the fact that this student had already done just that.

Valdez proceeded to describe in great detail the concept of renting something. He discussed the procedure for renting cars and roller skates as illustrations of the concept "renting". He never referred to the student's correct solution, and when he eventually returned to interpret the problem on the board, he held off student comments and questions. Ultimately, he invited the class to come up with a collective solution by having students call out their guesses as to the correct answer.

One possible explanation for these patterns is that Mr. Valdez is inexperienced and still does not feel totally confident as a teacher. He therefore resorts to modes in which he feels more secure, namely establishing rapport with students, relaying information he knows well, providing examples drawn from his own experience, explaining certain ideas or word meanings in great detail, and telling good stories that the students enjoy. Alternatively Mr. Valdez might teach this way out of choice. In staff meetings, informal discussions, and project interviews, Mr. Valdez often stressed how strongly he feels about "helping" students to understand things and to learn. He also commented frequently on most of the students' lack of background and world knowledge. Therefore this may be his way of trying to provide students with what he feels they need in order to learn. As Mr. Valdez stated many times, he values highly the use of ASL in the classroom. In addition to his narratives and explanations he would often translate English text into ASL or sign the gist of stories to students. His versions are more reflective of ASL and Deaf culture than of school-based traditions (e.g. being tied to text, analyzing language or literature, relating assignments to classroom lecture, etc.). It seems as if the components he feels are important to students' learning are all present in his style of teaching: filling in the gaps in students' background knowledge, translation, the relationship between ASL and English. However, he appears to present his material in a somewhat fragmented way, and with no discernable overall scheme or teaching plan.

Much of what Mr. Valdez says and does indicates that he is not comfortable in the role of teacher. "The teacher is not god here-- we're equals", he said at the beginning of the year. He comes across as the students' pal, often choosing to sit with them rather than in front of the class during lessons. When interviewed at the end of the year he described himself as having a "common ground" with students because he "travels in many circles among the Deaf community, not just with the Deaf elite."

On the subject of his teaching the reading and writing curriculum, Valdez described how, in his classes, they would "... compare the ASL signs and the English words, set up in columns side by side, for each vocabulary item [being taught]. The students would be shown the detailed definition in English and then in ASL signs that they could use to help them remember the meanings in English ... that's how vocabulary practice worked. We meant to spend about 15 or 20 minutes on that [out of the class session], but it ended up taking much more time. For instance if the word was new to a student, if they'd never heard of it before, my definitions and explanations would be much more lengthy. But, really, **that's what I'm there for**, I want to make sure they really understand." Thus he let the students dictate the pace and content of his lessons again reflecting the stance of the teacher as equal. Mr. Valdez is a helper, an advocate, a fellow member of the community with the students. His philosophy of the way teachers should relate to students is expressed best in his own words: "The teachers must be flexible with the students and be able to develop good rapport with them. ... It's important to feel rapport, to be friendly, not pressure the students too much."

Betty Walton

Betty Walton is a white Deaf woman in her early 40s. She has an undergraduate degree in

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Liberal Studies, and has been working toward a Master's degree in Deaf Education for the last several years. During the year we observed her, she taught a section of both the reading and writing classes, co-facilitated the women's rap group during the spring, co-taught the Orientation to College class, and assisted in the math class and daily lab.

Ms. Walton's section of the reading class consisted of four to seven of the least advanced students. During the first semester, class sessions focused on discussions of English vocabulary in short pieces assigned for reading, the acting out of short scripts taken from a basic reader, and attempts to translate some of the basic reading pieces into ASL. During the second semester, Walton (along with the other reading teachers) followed a curriculum designed specifically for the *DeafCAN* classes. A large part of this curriculum involved vocabulary development and translation skills in ASL and English.

Ms. Walton's style and attitude in the classroom reflected her joint status as a student and a teacher. In both her reading and writing sections Walton often deferred to hearing peers on questions of English vocabulary or usage. She appeared to view her hearing colleagues as experts with regard to English, and was often willing to share the role of class leader with them. At various times over the year she conferred with Ethan Stein or Carla Marsh for appropriate English translations from ASL, and sometimes asked questions of the hearing researcher who was filming the class. The questions typically centered on English vocabulary choices, either in translations from ASL, for the completion of cloze tests, or in the search for an accurate definition. Her attitude is summed up by her own words. One time when deliberating whether the word *drug* could be a past tense form of the verb *drag*, she proclaimed: "... we have a hearing person [i.e. the researcher] right here, let's ask her ...". Another time, after getting help from one of her hearing informants, she explained to the class: "English is hearing people's language ... it may seem strange to us, but that's hearing English, it's the way they use it ...".

In the early part of the year it was evident that Ms. Walton did not have a very clear idea of the distinctions between ASL and English. She would give her students the task of interpreting a simple English text into ASL, but, similar to Mr. Valdez, issued only very vague guidelines on how this should be done. On one occasion both she and her Deaf aide demonstrated the signing of a story in ASL so that the students understood a distinction was being made between ASL and English. However, she provided no information on the mechanics of translating from one language to the other, and did not provide methodological instructions or explanations on how to turn text into sign (see Section 5 for further discussion of this point). Walton typically commented on these occasions: "the English language has a strange way of doing things." This vagueness on Ms. Walton's part diminished somewhat during the second semester. She used her hearing peers increasingly often as expert informants, and appeared to become clearer on the distinctions between ASL and English.

The content of Walton's reading classes changed significantly from one semester to the next. In the fall the class did a lot of work with definitions of English vocabulary in ASL. Every session of the reading class we observed had examples of this activity, usually in the context of translating English text into ASL. Ms. Walton conveyed the notion that signing the text in a form of signed English is tedious and awkward, whereas ASL is a more comfortable and lively medium. Over the course of the year, Walton moved from giving little idea to the students on how to translate, to modeling for the class how to sign the lines of simple plays, and finally explicitly instructing them on how to translate English into ASL. In the fall, Ms Walton typically would exhort her class to "try and sign the text in a more ASL-like way". By Christmas she was providing examples of what she meant. For example, one method she used for demonstrating how to translate the English lines into ASL was by directing the students to focus on the characters' moods and making sure they were faithfully conveyed in their signs. By the second semester of the reading class Walton was explicitly instructing her students about how to translate English words into ASL, using a special system that was introduced to all the students in February. One month later the students appear able to relate the English vocabulary item to its ASL approximation after Ms. Walton's explanations and demonstrations.

Modeling and demonstration are activities that typify Walton's teaching style. Not only would Walton model correct methods or responses, she would also model appropriate ways to critique the responses of others. She would ask students if they agreed with a particular response, and when anyone was unsatisfied she would suggest questions designed to elicit better answers. This was apparently a successful technique since students were later observed to display their dissatisfaction with inadequate responses in other classes. A different kind of modeling occurred when Walton was an aide in Dr. Stubbs' writing class, and she walked to the front of the room to demonstrate to the students one of the relaxation exercises Stubbs had just described. In another setting, at one of the Women's Support Group meetings, Walton demonstrated ways of being more assertive with men. These are just some examples of a phenomenon that continued throughout the year wherever Walton was present. While other teachers also used modeling and role play in their teaching, it was most common in Walton's class.

Another characteristic of Walton's was her readiness to be a student as well as a teacher. One or other of her students would often spontaneously take over during a lecture or discussion, coming to the front of the room without being asked and entering what is traditionally thought of in classrooms as the teacher's domain. Once there, the student might offer his or her definition of a word the class had been discussing, provide another explanation for a difficult point that had eluded the others, or simply offer their own example of whatever phenomenon was being discussed. Walton was perfectly willing to relinquish her power and control over the classroom to a student under these conditions. Other teachers allowed this to happen in their classes, too, but it occurred much more frequently with Ms. Walton.

Her tendency to let this happen and her encouragement of student discussion reflect a teaching style sympathetic to student discovery of knowledge rather than teacher transmission of information. She encourages students to exploit their own knowledge, and to help one another, which they frequently do. Ms. Walton's style with her students is to be nurturing and encouraging. She is a caretaker, often repeating an assignment or an idea several times until she is satisfied that the students understand it. For example, during a reading class co-taught with Ethan Stein, her colleague is lecturing about the number of ASL signs that can define the English word *go* depending on the context of the sentence. Ms. Walton surveys the students, comments that they "look a bit puzzled" and asks Stein if he minds if she goes over that point with them. She then proceeds to re-explain the same point in her own way. On another occasion, her class had just convened with the rest of the English classes for a full group lecture by Mr. Valdez introducing the new *Deafology* reader that was to serve as text and content for the semester's reading classes. He set the stage for the discussion of early humans in the reader by lecturing about A.D./B.C. time, placing early hominid in their proper perspective in pre-history for the students. When Ms. Walton's students filed into her section after the lecture, she asked if they understood it. When some were clearly puzzled, she re-explained everything that Mr. Valdez had just covered. She justifies this approach during one staff meeting: "... the students often don't possess the schema to be able to understand readings without massive amounts of help and supplementary information." Despite her sense of the students' need for help and support, and her expression of this by what at times verges on overindulgence, Ms. Walton has a goal of independence for her students and tries occasionally to steer them in that direction. During a writing class, for example, she lectures about picking up the pace, "graduating" up to higher levels of work, and stresses that they "need to show [her] how serious they are about their work by turning things in on time, and [being more serious about their studies] ...".

In her interviews both at the beginning and end of the year, Ms. Walton echoed many of the sentiments of other staff. She talked about staff members being "like a family" and their team approach to the program and each other. In describing important qualities for a *DeafCAN* staff member she says, "... [one has to] think less of the self and more in terms of cooperation among the group." On the current staff she says: "It seems that all of us really work together ... it seems that we all really care about each other." Where she diverges from the opinions of other staff is in her remarks about Deaf and hearing staff working together and providing exposure to both the Deaf and hearing worlds: "They [the staff] must be able to work both in the Deaf culture and the hearing world without it being a problem, be able to approach hearing people or deal with what comes up ..." And: "I prefer [using] Deaf teachers, or a Deaf/hearing team approach in order to exchange knowledge of English, ASL, Deaf and hearing cultures, respectively. This way students and teachers can learn from each other, and the Deaf and hearing teachers can help each other."

Ms. Walton, like her colleagues, is frustrated with the lack of funding for the program ("... I just want to go forward without the skimping all the time ... struggling to make ends meet"), and also the teaching time limitations ("... three hours a week [to teach writing] just isn't enough ..."). She would like to see more resources for the program ("... like to have more room for our Deaf classes. We're often frustrated to find a hearing class being held in the rooms we use ... I also wish we could get a men's discussion group going ... I'd like to set-up an ASL writing curriculum ..."). In spite of her status as a volunteer, Ms. Walton acts like dedicated teacher who has the well-being of her students uppermost in her mind.

Ethan Stein

Ethan Stein is a white hearing man in his early 30s. His undergraduate degree is in Liberal Studies, and he has an M.Ed. with a focus on literacy and language development. Mr. Stein has been involved in education and the Deaf community for almost twenty years. Over the course of those years he has worked as a teacher's aide in classrooms with young and adolescent Deaf children, and as a certified sign language interpreter in a variety of settings. Mr. Stein spent one year as a "special" (hearing) student at Gallaudet University, and has been involved in many theatrical and artistic productions in the Deaf community. For the last nine years he has worked at Laney College, first as an interpreter, then as coordinator of interpreting services, and most recently in helping to create and establish the *DeafCAN* program, through teaching, tutoring, and curriculum development. Over the course of this year, he taught a section of the reading class, provided tutoring, and taught a section of the writing course for the fall semester. He signs ASL fluently and Deaf people often assume he is Deaf on first meeting him.

When teaching, Mr. Stein most often seemed to function as a facilitator or a model for his students. He encourages his students to think independently, and to see themselves and each other as sources of knowledge. Examples of this attitude and practice were often evident in Mr. Stein's section of the reading class, and the noon lab where he helped and tutored students. Much of Stein's focus in his reading class was on discussion. These discussions were generated from assigned readings and study questions or vocabulary based in the readings. For example, in a section of his reading class early in the year the students are focused on a troublesome piece on industrial pollution. For the first half of the class, Stein goes over vocabulary. First he writes a word on the blackboard, and then solicits definitions from the class. They collectively decide upon an ASL gloss for each word, and Stein writes them in capital letters next to the English words on the board. He explains that the purpose of this exercise is so that they "will have a record of what the vocabulary words mean in glossed ASL that makes sense to them." At several points during the activity he tells students that "if these glosses don't work for [you], in terms of calling to mind the definitions in ASL that the class has collectively discussed and decided upon, then [you] should use their own glosses ... whatever helps [you] remember the meaning ...".

In this way Stein empowers students both by making explicit the purpose of the task, and establishing them as valid contributors to their own (and each others') fund of knowledge. During the same activity, Stein solicits the students' ASL glosses or English words for the vocabulary before proposing any himself. Toward the end of that class, they move on to a discussion of their answers to assigned study questions at the end of the reading. Again Mr. Stein turns responsibility back to the students by encouraging them to think and argue with one another, and to analyze their and each others' answers to the multiple-choice study questions. Stein directs the discussion at times, guiding students with open-ended questions. When students disagree with one another, Mr. Stein encourages them to defend their answers and discuss the differences together, which they do in a very spirited manner.

During a discussion of students' answers to study questions, Stein has class members representing each multiple choice form a "panel" and sit before the class to discuss and defend their rival answers with each other and the rest of the class. He serves here, again, as a facilitator, directing the discussion with leading questions from time to time to illustrate an important point he wants students to focus on (e.g. the author's intent in writing the passage).

During a session of his section of the writing class, Mr. Stein again encourages students to take charge during a discussion on verb conjugations. When questions are raised about the appropriate tense to use, or the meanings of different words in a sentence, Mr. Stein turns it back to the students to justify their answers, which they do.

Mr. Stein often seizes on student ideas that may seem at first glance to be off-track as "right answers." For example in one class late in the year he is introducing the concept of the use of context while reading. He begins by writing the word *con/text* on the blackboard and soliciting student understandings of the word. When one student recognizes *con* as the Spanish word for *with*, Stein capitalizes on this observation and uses it to direct the class to the meaning of *context*. In another instance, during a reading class that introduced students to a standardized notation system for glossing ASL signs, Stein is trying to solicit from students what they think *notation*, a foreign word to them, might mean. One student says with much hesitation that "... the word itself looks like the word 'notes' ..." and wonders aloud if it could be at all related. Stein makes use of her observation and directs the class to think of the notation system as "notes" for the ASL signs.

These examples illustrate Mr. Stein's strategy of using students' knowledge, as well as his own, to launch discussion and instruction. Generally, Mr. Stein will model how to accomplish or figure out a new task, first using what they already know as a base and then demonstrating the new concept and practicing it with them. This is reminiscent of the technique used by Ms. Walton. In other instances, Stein will lead students to discover the correct answer or process by asking them questions that force them into a deeper analysis of the problem. He tends to push or challenge students, rarely simply accepting a right answer. In addition, Stein routinely elaborates on students' responses providing them with an opportunity to strengthen and broaden their background knowledge.

Sometimes students reacted against Stein's method of teaching. After receiving their midterm exams back in the spring, some students were disturbed by their grades, and felt that Stein's method of teaching vocabulary was at fault. They claimed: "You went through it too quickly ... were in too much of a hurry ... didn't make sure that [we] were able to keep up ...". Stein responded to these comments by maintaining: "it's the students' responsibility to keep up with their work ... [you are] real college students and [I] don't want to treat you like children ...". The issue regarding the degree of students' responsibility for their own education was a point of disagreement both with students and other staff members, several of whom tended to treat the students as more dependent and helpless. Stein explained to his class that he wanted "to prepare you for moving on in school, in the mainstream, [that you should] be able to take responsibility for how to take a test, or how to study, [that I] shouldn't have to do everything for you, [that it's up to you] to stay caught up with the workload ...". Following this, one student accuses Stein of "not respecting Deaf people." Another student, however, after initially agreeing with the other students' complaints during this same discussion, ultimately said that Stein "... is right ... I've been in mainstream classes, and it's true what he says ... you have to keep up ... those teachers don't wait for you ...".

Mr. Stein, like Ms. Walton, would often model for students the kind of information he wanted from them. For example, students were discussing the content of a piece they had read that was set in Sweden. Stein probed the students for more information, reinforced good answers, and then modeled the kind of information he was looking for by giving a detailed description in vivid ASL of the bucolic Swedish countryside portrayed in the piece. Stein followed up by emphasizing the importance of getting "the whole picture" or wider setting of a reading, and then continuing the discussion with students as they tried to construct the context of the story collectively.

Mr. Stein's typical procedure, then, when teaching students a skill (e.g. use of context clues to aid reading comprehension, translating English text into ASL glosses or discourse), was first to solicit student input, then provide an explanation to expand their understanding, followed by a modeling of the skill, and finally to apply it in practice with the class. His instruction is explicit. He teaches the students how to perform a task, making clear both the process involved, and the purpose of it. A good example of this progression came when he introduced the notion of *metaphor*. Mr. Stein first wrote the word *metaphor* on the board and solicited definitions from students. He then explained and modeled the concept, using examples, discussed the examples with students, and finally had them return to the reading passage to search for metaphors.

The purpose of showing students how or why they should use context, metaphor, the author's intentions, or vocabulary translated from the English text, was to provide students with strategies they could use to help them read. In the class on *context*, Stein stressed the importance of using it as a tool to help them read and understand the text. The same was true for the understanding of *setting*, *the bigger picture*, and *metaphor*. These are academic or school-based strategies, as were his attempts to get students to use logical reasoning in their arguments, and ultimately, all are tied back to in the texts which were the source of the original lesson or discussion.

Mr. Stein appears to have a good rapport with students. His lessons are full of joking and banter between teacher and students, as are many of his interactions outside of the classroom. It was unusual to find him in his office without a few students telling stories and joking around as well as checking schedules or classwork. Stein's year as a student at Gallaudet enabled him to take part in the exchange of shared knowledge of University people and events that is a cultural pastime among many Deaf people. References to his experiences there are made frequently in class, during lab sessions, and at other times.

Between his first and year-end interviews, a difference emerged in Mr. Stein's view of the *DeafCAN* curriculum. During the first interview Stein remarked on the lack of any basic curriculum: "We don't have one any more. This year I'm really at a loss ... [we don't have] any one connected and unified curriculum like we've had in previous years." Almost a year later, he felt that they had spent the previous months working from a very developed curriculum. He described how they switched their process in the English classes during the second semester when the new curriculum was introduced. He explained that prior to this they had always introduced ASL first in the reading classes, to show them that "... translating ASL, having them read ASL, giving them the idea that this is also reading and this is also a language." Mr. Stein described the resistance staff had often experienced in the past:

> "starting off that way we've always run into resistance ... they're not taking an ASL class, they're taking an English class, they want English. They want grammar, they want corrections, they want red pencil, they want homework, and we're giving them this 'oh you're beautiful and your language is beautiful.' It's bunk, that doesn't mean anything to them yet."

The new curriculum told the history of English, using it as a springboard into the history of ASL and how to use that language for access to English. Stein had positive feelings about the direction of both the curriculum and the students. He felt that use of the new materials had provided staff with an opportunity to see what worked and what did not, and that now they could learn from their mistakes and use the materials more efficiently in the future. He also noted a change in his own teaching, over the course of the year. He remarked that he used "more structure" in his reading class than he had previously, partly because he felt: "... I've just gotten more together, I know what I'm doing more and the other thing is that I know that that's what they want, that's what they expect out of school."

At the end of the year Mr. Stein described his disappointment with the "bicultural" aspect of the program. He complained of differences in viewpoints and splits between the hearing and Deaf staff:

> "For me, one of the biggest disappointments about the program, and maybe I expect too much, and maybe I don't have anything to compare it to, and maybe it's no worse than other programs, but I feel like the Deaf people and the hearing people are often at odds ... If we were dealing with [biculturalism] ourselves as an issue, as a topic of study or inquiry, I think that would filter down to the students, and then they would see, I think most of our students don't see it as a problem yet, they don't even perceive it, this whole idea of biculturalism, or what it means to be able to crossover ...".

He suggests adding a component to the program that would take on "crossover issues" from Deaf culture to hearing culture that students will eventually have to deal with.

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On the plus side, Stein highlighted the graduating of three students from the college after many years of having no Deaf graduates. When asked how he thought the program failed students, he said that their failure lay in not teaching them English, or not preparing them to be able to thrive in mainstream colleges or at Gallaudet. He suggested that this "lack" might be because of "something missing" in the program's philosophy, although he was unsure as to exactly what that might be.

After describing the lack of administrative support from the college cited by other staff members, Mr. Stein suggested "for the future" that *DeafCAN* should consider seeking "another institution to become a part of." Additionally, in *DeafCAN*'s future he would like to see:

> "more classes and some more diversity. I think we need more levels of reading and writing. We need more. We just need more of everything. I'd like to see more support for mainstreaming students. More tutors, more tutoring, some kind of training for tutors, some kind of time for tutors to reflect and work together ... some kind of support class or group for mainstreamed students ... that might address the whole thing I was talking about ... It's not really that they need new signs, they need to know how to talk [code-switch] around hearing people."

When asked to describe important qualities for a *DeafCAN* staff member to have, Stein replied: "They should be independently wealthy so that when they don't get paid on time, they can hang." More seriously, he commented: "... they'd have to be somebody who's interested in learning and interested in lifelong learning, and understands that we're all still learning. We're learning how to do it, and we're learning from each other and learning from the students ...".

Wilbert Wang

Wilbert Wang is a Chinese Deaf man in his mid-30s. He moved to the United States from Hong Kong at the age of eighteen. After attending a local community college, he studied at Gallaudet University, where he received his B.S. degree in Mathematics and Computer Science. He recently received an M.Ed. in Special Education from a local university. Before coming to *DeafCAN*, he taught math at the same community college he had previously attended. In addition to teaching the math and computer courses in *DeafCAN*, he also teaches math, and ASL (to hearing students) at other institutions. During the year of the project, Mr. Wang taught both semesters of the math class, and the first semester of the computer literacy prep class.

Usually, the math class followed the same three-part format each week. The first part of class was an individually-paced lab where students worked their way through arithmetic curricula, with the help of tutors, staff, and fellow students. Following this, Mr. Wang generally introduced or explained concepts related to arithmetic. Finally, the class worked on a *word problem* together, with either or both Mr. Valdez and Ms. Walton. Wang's purpose for introducing the word problem component was to be able draw from students' real-life experiences in order to formulate arithmetic problems to be presented collectively by the staff and solved collaboratively by the class. A good illustration of this procedure was observed early on in the year when Ms. Walton and Mr. Wang formulated a written problem around one student's (real) costs for moving into her apartment. Wang and Walton worked as a team, first helping the class decipher the problem from it's written form on the blackboard, and then in guiding their collaborative efforts to do the arithmetic for it's solution. Later, during a spring math class, Mr. Wang and Mr. Valdez presented another problem on the topic of ticket sales promotions for a football game to teach the concept of prime numbers. The question of one student's rent calculations came up later in the same class, and Wang endorsed the notion to the class that a particular student had "... come up with a real-life problem that they had all solved together". He then solicited further problems that might be suitable for solving in the math class. Mr. Wang seems to feel strongly that it's important for the students to be able to relate the arithmetic to their daily lives: as he stated at the end of the year:

> "... I try to push them towards studying and succeeding, not just in sort of boring school drill work in multiplication and division, but ... we'll do the math work for problems that have to do with budgeting for apartments or rent, figuring deposits--they bring those problems in themselves ... it's math work that directly relates to real life situations. It's better with that kind of link."

During the individually paced lab portion of the math class, Mr. Wang always appeared flexible, patient, and respectful of students, no matter what their level of ability. For example, he worked with some students who were stuck over a small detail concerning decimals and fractions in the workbook, while at the same time giving another, easily frustrated student long-term coaching on the process of reducing fractions. Towards the end of the year he worked with two of the more advanced students on simple algebraic equations, coaching and setting up practice problems for most of the first half of the lab. Mr. Wang successfully communicated with each of his students, regardless of their language abilities. Additionally, Mr. Wang is willing and able to stay with an explanation of what, to an outside observer, may seem a very elementary arithmetic concept, for as long as it takes his students to comprehend it fully. No matter how many times he may have to repeat or re-phrase his explanations, sometimes spending an entire lecture session on the one basic idea, he doesn't seem to become impatient with his students. In his year-end interview, Mr. Wang stressed the importance of teachers' *attitudes*. When asked to describe an ideal candidate for a position as a *DeafCAN* teacher, Wang said:

> "Their attitude would be the number one factor ... someone who had a lot of patience, understanding, flexibility, very well-versed in their subject area ... and with a good attitude; that's the kind of person we'd take on as a staff member ... in terms of skills they'd have to also be knowledgeable about math and English, of course, but what's really important is their attitude-- their ability to really relate to the students. They could be brilliant, but if their ability to relate to the students is crummy, then their brilliance is worthless."

His behavior underlined these beliefs.

Another feature of Mr. Wang's lectures was his tendency to illustrate concepts with references, not only to everyday life, but in particular to Deaf affairs, and the relationship between ASL and English. For example in an early fall semester class when describing computer languages to the class, he suggests that "... learning the computer's language is the key to communicating with the computer in much the same way that a hearing person would learn ASL in order to communicate with a Deaf person." In the same class session he is explaining what computer "syntax errors" are and likens the computer language's syntax to the syntax of English. In another early fall class, while reviewing a chapter from the textbook on how to "communicate" with a computer, Mr. Wang again uses the analogy between sign language and computer languages for access (to a Deaf person, or a computer, respectively). During an early December class, Wang is describing how "set" or restricted the parameters of a computer program are. He likens them to the rules of English grammar, both of which, he explains, are "set that way ... static ... immutable." In several other instances, Mr. Wang uses metaphors related to ASL, deafness, or components of *DeafCAN* to explain to his students how various parts and functions of computers operate.

Mr. Wang also makes use of Deaf cultural knowledge in his materials. For example, during an October computer lab session he has students playing a guessing game with a program he'd written that focused on the date that Gallaudet University was established. Class members entered their guess into the computer, and it would tell them whether their guess was "too early" or "too late." This exercise led Mr. Wang into an impromptu history lesson about the founding of Deaf education and Thomas Gallaudet, the founder of the University. During this exercise, as in his and other *DeafCAN* classes, Wang encouraged the students to work collaboratively to find the answer to the problem.

In the computer literacy prep class, Mr. Wang seems to function in more of a traditional teacher role, although it is mediated by his commitment to what seems to be the *DeafCAN way*: flexibility, sharing control of the class with students, etc. The class is divided into two parts-- lecture, and application of lecture and homework material in the adjacent computer lab. The lectures elaborate on and reinforce material in the assigned homework readings which focus on the basic functions and operation of computers and simple computer languages, along with how to operate simple programs. Mr. Wang is teaching subject matter that has a prescribed content following a certain order that corresponds to both the textbook and the relevant computer programs. This is different in nature from the English classes whose goal of literacy acquisition is more amorphous. With the possible exception of Dr. Stubbs' Deaf Culture course, Mr. Wang's computer literacy lectures are perhaps the most *content-based* of the *DeafCAN* classes. This may account for his more traditional lecturing style, with material tied to the textbook, and where classroom dynamics are more tightly controlled. The lectures' content includes description/review of the parts and functions of a computer's memory capacity, types of computers, the function of computers' CPU, special computer terms and vocabulary, the function of logic within computers' processing activities, and the discussion of more theoretical questions about the interface between computers and humans.

He appeared to have a basic respect for the students and made it clear that he valued their input. For example, during one lecture a student tries to remember the correct spelling for a computer system brand name. She creates a mnemonic device to remember the spelling and Mr. Wang is full of praise for her clever idea. He told the class how much he enjoyed "... learning things from [them] ...".

In both interviews Mr. Wang spoke about the special qualities that *DeafCAN* staff must have: "[Staff] need to be able to figure out how to transmit what THEY know to the student in a way that makes sense to the student, that doesn't go over his/her head. The methods that are generally taught in Deaf education courses don't really apply to what we do here." Also, in describing the program at the end of the year, he said:

> "... the teachers support the students in ways that other college programs don't ... we really assume roles of teacher and counselor, both ... we're really **involved** with the students, there's a certain continuity that way, and I think it's a unique situation ... [at other college programs] the students are curious about what the teachers are like out of class, where they live or what they're about. Here, they know everything. Where we live, what we study, you know, it's like a family."

On what makes the program special, Mr. Wang stated:

> "We really care about the individual, we're more like a family. Other programs are good but the student is left more on their own to deal with problems. Here, we provide lots of encouragement and want the student to feel connected to the program and teachers. We stick by them...If they don't show up for a class or a meeting we like to know why, what's going on."

On the less positive side, Wang felt that the math curriculum needed to be "fixed." As he described it at the end of the year:

> "... there's just not enough time. There's just no time ... [I'd like to extend the time] on Mondays and Wednesdays to one or two hours of discussion. Let them get it all out-- their questions and concerns about taxes, about SSI-- things they'd understand better after some real explanations of how they work. Talk about percentages and principles, most of them know nothing about how a bank works, that kind of thing."

Concerning the computer literacy course:

> "... there are some changes that need to be made. For one thing, the computer vocabulary in the book needs to be translated. It would also be great to have a Deaf role model for them in the computer lab, but the person in the lab is hearing so we try to make that work."

Looking toward the future, Mr. Wang would like to acquire more materials for the program. He talks about ASL videotapes and:

> "computer/video programs that would assist students in learning English ... It would also be great to have some type of computer graphics packages that would help link the math concepts and terms that I go over in class with a visual and written English representation that the student could call up on-screen."

During the second interview, Wang describes other technologies that he would like to bring to *DeafCAN*, like the [1]ENFI system currently in use at Gallaudet, computer-aided-instruction packages that would address the word problems from the math class, and video laserdisc programs. He bemoans the absence of funding for these devices, and also cites the lack of financial and administrative support for full-time teaching positions as being part of the problem. As Mr. Wang puts it:

> "If I were able to work in a full-time capacity here, I could really focus on equipment, like the ENFI system, work on the computer graphics ideas for a couple of years until I could get that running successfully. But as it is now, working three jobs all over the place, I haven't got any time for that sort of thing, developing ENFI-- I mean it's always just scraping to get by. But if I worked full-time I could attend to those things."

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[1] ENFI is a computer set-up in classrooms at Gallaudet University that links students and teachers and allows them to carry-on discussion and dialogue on their computer terminals via written English.

Jennifer Sloan

Jennifer Sloan is a white hearing woman in her late-30s. She has served as the counselor for all disabled students, including the Deaf, since 1983. Ms. Sloan received her M.A. degree in Counseling Education, working first in rehabilitation counseling with developmentally disabled people for three years. Her interest in deafness began when she started her internship at Laney College and encountered Deaf people for the first time. She enrolled in sign language classes because of her inability to communicate with her Deaf office mates. She received a certificate in Deafness and Rehabilitation counseling after completing an intensive summer training program in 1986. In addition to her duties as counselor, she taught a course in career and life planning in *DeafCAN* during the 1987-88 academic year. During the year of observation, Ms. Sloan taught one semester of an Orientation to College class, and implemented the women students' peer support group, which continues to be a part of the *DeafCAN* program.

We were unable to observe Ms. Sloan counseling students of *DeafCAN* for obvious reasons of privacy. We did, however, watch Ms. Sloan at two sessions of her Orientation to College course during the spring semester, and at one meeting of the women's peer group that she facilitates. She co-taught the Orientation to College course with Ms. Walton. Ms. Sloan worked closely with Ms. Walton, making the most of Walton's ASL fluency as a complement to her own talents. For example, on several occasions Walton expanded or rephrased Sloan's explanations in ASL, and at times provided supplementary information. The two women worked well as a team, with each of them seeming to know intuitively when to step in to help the other without it appearing as an interruption. At the end of the year, Ms. Sloan commented in her interview on the value of team teaching with Deaf staff:

> "... the beauty of the program is that, for instance, Carla [another hearing staff member] might not have absolutely excellent ASL skills, or I might not, but I get help from Betty [Ms. Walton], we get help from the Deaf staff and we all collaborate together 'cause we all have different levels of knowledge in terms of what we can provide ... that's another quality that the staff has to have-- to be able to work together as a team and appreciate each other's strengths and weaknesses ...".

Later in the same interview she lamented the "aide" status of some of the Deaf staff: "I'm constantly amazed, and I feel like I can only do my job because Betty is here and [a Deaf tutor] is here. I really depend on the Deaf staff to get more information and it just doesn't feel right to me that they're in that sort of aide, para-professional position."

Ms. Sloan presented herself in class as a facilitator rather than a director. She tells students, "I'm not the boss, just the teacher ... here to help you know and understand your options." Sloan began the first class session by asking her students what they thought the class was designed for. Only after feedback from students did she establish her own perspective on the purpose of the class. She explained that she was there to help students deal with "college issues" like degree requirements, credentials and certificates, and how to plan classes with those things in mind so they could "get what they want out of college". In the first session she had the students take turns telling why they were in college. As they responded, both she and Ms. Walton asked questions to help draw more information about their purpose for being in college. Ms. Sloan offered herself and the class as a resource, stating: "... there are many things to remember in order to survive in college and if those things

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aren't being covered sufficiently in class you should approach me or [Ms. Walton] with your questions." Ms. Sloan followed the pattern, familiar from other *DeafCAN* teachers, of first soliciting student input and then using it as a launching pad for discussion and elaboration. In another example, Sloan was helping students examine their daily schedules and study habits so they could budget their time and select places that would allow them to study more efficiently. First she had students take turns describing their study habits, then she used these responses as a starting point for discussion on how to organize and plan their college work.

In addition to using student input, Sloan gave students guidelines designed to help improve their ability to communicate in class and with one another in general. For example, at one point during the class on study schedules, the discussion began to degenerate into students just talking among themselves and not attending to the points their classmates were making. Sloan called for everyone's attention, stressed the "... importance of communicating ...", and outlined the rules: "... only one person talks at a time and the others must attend to him/her ... it's a way to show respect for each other ...".

Another example of the pattern of eliciting input followed by issuing guidelines came later in the same session. Once the group was successfully focused on the topic of study habits, Ms. Sloan built on the scenarios that students presented by offering suggestions and remedies concerning how and where to study most effectively. She also continued to pose the questions raised by students back to the group, thus demonstrating her previously stated position of "not being the boss." Sloan then summarized what was needed for good studying habits having drawn on the students' experiences and added her own suggestions. She introduced the idea of scheduling their time, and then she and Ms. Walton spent the rest of the class helping students to figure out how to budget time to allow for more effective studying. A similar pattern of facilitation and proposal of guidelines for communication and problem-solving was also in evidence in the women's support group. During one of the first few sessions of the group in early spring, Ms. Sloan established some guidelines (e.g. "respect others, no gossip, attend every time, no insults, say something you want every time, confidentiality ...") which she wrote on the blackboard and had the students read and interpret into their own words. This provided a framework for students to express themselves and to access self-help strategies useful both in school and non-school environments.

Ms. Sloan, by her own definition, is not the most fluent ASL signer among the staff. However, she always seemed to understand the students or to work closely enough with other Deaf staff members to circumvent any communication difficulties. Additionally, Ms. Sloan always appeared sensitive to Deaf cultural ways in her communication. In both the class that she taught and in the women's group she would gain the visual attention of the group before beginning to sign. She arranged the students in her Orientation class in a semi-circle, a formation conducive to discussion in sign language. Both of these behaviors are prerequisite to successful communication in a group of people who are signers and are common practice in group interaction among signing people.

In the women's group, such topics as sexual harassment, rape, assertiveness, and male/female roles were discussed. Ms. Sloan, Ms. Walton and a Deaf tutor in the program, watched along with the students as they related their stories and problems, their triumphs and concerns. A warmth was evident among the group. They applauded peers when they arrived at the meeting, and provided support and understanding when someone recounted difficult emotional experiences, such as surviving a rape, or trying to become independent from overprotective parents. Again, Sloan used the same teaching formula we observed in her Orientation class: solicitation of input, elaboration of ideas, formulation of guidelines. For instance, when one student described discomfort resulting from the flirtations of a man she saw daily, first Ms. Sloan helped her by describing the differences between harassment and flirtation ("... any time it makes you feel uncomfortable you have the right to tell him to cut it out ...")., then, along with Ms. Walton and the other staff tutor, she offered ways to deal with the situation, arming the student with several options, which the group and staff helped her practice through role plays and talking. Through the structuring of the group protocol, modeling, and encouragement, Ms. Sloan enabled these women students to develop a network of solidarity and support with one another.

In both of her interviews Ms. Sloan voiced her concern that the program needed more Deaf staff, and that those staff should be paid as professionals. In the first interview she said: "I think we need more Deaf staff. A Deaf counselor who's more fluent than me in ASL-- like [Betty Walton]-- who co-counsels with me and uses the language so well, but is not a paid professional." She went on to say: "We want permanent staff positions for these people. All the Deaf staff are hourly workers, except for one position." She talked about the struggles that the program had to stay afloat, and the lack of upper-level administrative support that has drained energy from staff members and the program. When asked to describe what she felt wasn't working in *DeafCAN* over the year of the study, Ms. Sloan said:

> "The staffing isn't working because there needs to be, I think the staff people need to have permanence. They need to feel like they're getting benefits and that they're going to be staying. Last year it really didn't work because [Roy Valdez] got laid off, [David Stubbs] got laid off. Everybody was getting laid off at the end of the year, and in terms of morale it was the lowest."

At the beginning of the year she had said:

> "I believe the concepts and framework of the program can and do work, but we need more money to stabilize it. We've always had the support of the academic dean, without him we wouldn't have been able to do it. But we're not like [a local community college with a large Deaf student population], with the official recognition, and we didn't have a big pot of money to start up with. The need was there and so we just started something."

Referring to other things that "aren't working," Sloan described a lack in "overall planning and organization." In the second interview she said:

> "... [I wish we were] able to plan ahead and really have things sort of set in place so that we're not constantly putting things together at the last minute ... there's a freneticism about it that is crazy making for the staff and it drains everybody's energy."

Ms. Sloan described the program at the outset as follows:

> "It's an attempt to build a bilingual/bicultural program and teach students to have pride and esteem in their own Deaf identity and language. There's an attempt to teach them English through a better understanding of how their own language works, and how to apply those rules to English." "[*Deaf*]*CAN* succeed in an academic environment, *can* learn, *can* master English at some level, *can* enter a vocational program, or even just improve their communication skills and go back into the world. There are a lot of levels of *can*. It's not

> just academic."

Looking back, she said:

> "Honestly what I see as being successful is the amount of support students get. That they've been accepted for exactly who they are, exactly at the language level that they're at and then they get to progress from there ... I feel like we were really successful with a certain core group of students who were very wavery in terms of their emotional place in the world and that we really made students, I mean really active learners, out of some students who showed up at the beginning of the semester, the fall semester, and they were completely flipped about, they were afraid about being in college. They were intimidated by the whole process and through the support we were able to give them, they really learned, and they became a community of learners at the end of the year. And [this year] they're back."

When asked to describe an important achievement over the year of the study, Ms. Sloan cited the women's support group:

> "There still needs to be improvement, but what happened is those women started to be much more supportive and cooperative with each other in class and that was the real change. That hadn't happened before and I think it was not magic, it was simply putting them in a room together to do problem solving and support rather than bicker and gossip."

She continued:

> "... I also think that the staff worked really well together ... all of the collaboration that we do, the weekly staff meetings really made a difference. There was more continuity and, from my perspective, I had more awareness of what was going on with all the individual students, which I think is important. It's pretty labor intensive."

Regarding desires for the future, Ms. Sloan replied:

> "... [more] staffing, more time, more efficient use of time in terms of planning, more money ... I'd like to see [*DeafCAN*] institutionalized. I think it needs to have permanency somewhere. Either here at Laney or wherever it could happen, but ... we can't continue the way things have been going without regularizing the staff ... it makes it hard to do the kind of planning I was talking about. Being able to plan for the fall semester, and knowing for sure that there are going to be X number of instructional aids and X number of instructors and that the transition program that we've set up will work, that they will indeed be able to mainstream. The students will lose their confidence in the system if we're not able to do that."

Carla Marsh

Carla Marsh is a white, hearing woman in her early forties. She has one M.A. degree in English Literature, another in Reading, and a Reading Specialist's Credential. She has spent the last twenty-three years as an English teacher at Laney College, and, during that time, completed a Ph.D. in Education specializing in Language and Literacy. She has been involved in a project designed to teach teachers how to teach writing skills, and now functions as a researcher for that project. In addition to coordinating a campus-wide project that "teaches basic skills to underprepared students," she helped create and coordinate the *DeafCAN* program. During the year of the study, Dr. Marsh co-taught classes with other staff members, provided assistance and consultation to staff, developed program curricula, and helped tutor students. In earlier stages of the *DeafCAN* program, Dr. Marsh regularly co-taught classes with Mr. Stein, but as the program and staff have expanded, regular teaching assignments have been largely taken over by other staff members.

We did not observe Dr. Marsh as a regular teacher in any of the classes, but her involvement in all facets of the program was well documented. At various times she was observed providing in-class support and consultation to staff members, helping to structure curricula and program protocol in staff meetings, co-teaching sporadically with various staff members for select classes, and tutoring or co-tutoring individual students.

Dr. Marsh often served as an advisor to the less experienced teachers, in particular with Ms. Walton. She would frequently sit in on classes, where her role would oscillate between observer and participant. She was variously an aide, a tutor, a consultant, and a teacher. Dr. Marsh has spoken several times about the growth and development of Deaf staff members in their craft as teachers, and her behavior in their classes reflects a commitment to helping bring this about. When Dr. Marsh intervened to help a student or the teacher, she did so without intruding or disturbing the flow of the class. Sometimes the teacher would ask for her help, sometimes she intervened in the capacity of a teacher trainer, thus serving both the students and the teacher.

In one reading class with Ms. Walton, we see Dr. Marsh move from her chair to the front of the class with a student who is nervous about signing her story to the others. Dr. Marsh later writes questions on the blackboard related to the signing activity that is going on, as Ms. Walton continues to conduct it. Later on she interjects a comment designed to help direct the flow of conversation, and then Ms. Walton continues. In a writing class, one student does not understand some of Dr. Stubbs' metaphors. Dr. Marsh makes a suggestion that the teacher "give more of a direct explanation of how that process works" to the student. During a session of Mr. Valdez's reading class, Dr. Marsh comes up with an alternative homework assignment for a student who had not had the experiences upon which the homework was based. In her reading class, Ms. Walton is working on the interpretation of dialogue that students are reading and acting out from short scripts in their books. During a discussion about the correlation between punctuation in text and the mood or feeling the text conveys, Dr. Marsh comes forward to give an example of how punctuation can serve to convey attitude. Later on in that same class, just before it ends, Marsh provides a short tutorial designed to help students understand a broader range of emotion in the lines of characters from the text they had been working on.

Sometimes Dr. Marsh would intervene to help teachers understand something. For example, just before a late November session of Mr. Valdez's reading class, Dr. Marsh approaches him to discuss a translation problem the students had while he had been out of town the previous week. Dr. Marsh tries to solve the problem by having Mr. Valdez do the task himself. When he has trouble doing it, Dr. Marsh is able to illustrate graphically the difficulties of this task for the class, and coaches Mr. Valdez on ways to deal with them.

Dr. Marsh's advice was sometimes directly solicited by other staff members, when they had difficulties or dilemmas in the classroom. For example, Mr. Stein approached Dr. Marsh one late

November afternoon. He was concerned about an attendance drop in his reading class. He felt there was "something wrong" in the way the class was progressing and he saw the drop in attendance as confirmation. Dr. Marsh began to analyze the situation, making practical suggestions on the spot about what and how to teach them. Ms. Walton, in contrast, used Dr. Marsh as an expert informant for English. Several times during one reading class while working on English/ASL vocabulary translations, Walton checked with her on questions of usage and definition. In another session Ms. Walton was trying to explain to her students that a single-action verb might use two English words (e.g. take up). When she got stuck, she called Dr. Marsh over from an the adjoining classroom to help out. Ms. Walton added her comments to Marsh's explanation, stating to the students that she "is learning too" from Dr. Marsh's demonstration.

At other times Dr. Marsh either co-taught with Ms. Walton or Mr. Stein, or participated with several other teachers in special combined sessions of the reading classes. Her style of co-teaching varied according to the other teacher. With Ms. Walton, Marsh left the control and direction of the class to her colleague, while sharing responsibility with her for the instructional content. Her style with Mr. Stein appeared to be carried over from their association in the classroom before *DeafCAN* was a developed program. Usually Dr. Marsh would lecture aloud to the class while Mr. Stein translated her spoken words into ASL, adding his own ideas and elaborations along the way. Sometimes, however, Dr. Marsh would stand at the sidelines while Mr. Stein instructed the class, calling out concepts or ideas that she wanted the students to know about, that he then incorporated into his signed instruction.

Twice during the spring semester we observed the reading classes meeting as one large group to cover material relevant to all the students. During one of these sessions, Mr. Valdez, Ms. Walton, Mr. Stein, and Dr. Marsh had planned to bring to life a "mead hall" from the medieval times students had been reading about in their *History of English* reading curriculum, complete with costumes, play-acting, and dramatic readings. The second occasion was held to mark the end of the English history component of the reading curriculum, and introduce the beginning of the ASL unit. The unit introduction included a lecture and skit about the differences between English and ASL. For both of these combined sessions Dr. Marsh served as a part of the team, engaged in the actions, skits, interactions with students, and lecture with the other staff members.

Sometimes Dr. Marsh acted as a tutor for students. This occurred either informally, between classes in the *DeafCAN* office, or by arrangement in the daily lab, and at office hours. Dr. Marsh's direction in teaching and creating curricula seems to be driven both by her intuition about students from years of teaching, and by research-based models. It seems that she constantly keeps in mind the more global aspects of the program in her thinking, as well as drawing from the various models of the reading and writing process that she has studied. From an early December entry in her journal:

> "We have been writing on topics that students select-- 'A friend, my pet, a remembrance of my family, a school experience.' I am following Donald Graves' writing program, designed to develop fluency and investment in the work ...".

From another journal entry:

> "Finally the reading class is on its own. [Mr. Stein's] group has gotten into the sticky topic of English and sign, and there is a first sign of engagement. R, [Ms. Walton], and J. argued for over an hour after class about the value of studying ASL and English at the

> same time, R. maintaining it is confusing, [Ms. Walton] that is helpful. I have always had faith that this wrestling was necessary-- without respect for the oppressed language, no new language learning can happen ...".

From a mid-December entry:

> "... building a bicultural program is made up of taking dozens of such tiny elements drawn from the community and shaping them to fit into the college community-- the tune comes from the students and we transpose it into a new key ... And certain tasks that are school specific-- like essay topics-- must be re-contextualized, transposed into a Deaf-community key so that "A Close Brush With Death," (Labov's famous prompt in Harlem) becomes "F on Forehead." Bicultural. A knitting together of broken bone, the break coming not only along Deaf/hearing lines, but also along lines of whether or not I am identifying myself as a 'school person,' getting part of affirmation of self from my participation in the academic world. It's bound to be a long process because it's a bad fracture, often splintered and not even recognizable as a single bone."

Dr. Marsh has expressed concern about the degree to which various staff members differ in their philosophies about how to best reach the students. Regarding Mr. Valdez's style, early in December she remarked that: "... he and I have so many differences over how to help the students become better readers ...". Regarding a question raised by Ms. Walton during a staff meeting about the difference between "advocating" for a student versus "rescuing" that student, Dr. Marsh says, "... she and I share this issue, we both fight for individual students and probably go over the line to rescue rather than support."

In the more formal comments during her second interview, recorded in the fall of 1989, Dr. Marsh described the changes she felt the program had undergone during the year of observation. She described the curriculum as encompassing more "content" instead of the primary focus being on the "ASL and English issues." Dr. Marsh talked about what led her to create new books for use in the reading classes instead of using the student narratives as text, as had been done in previous years:

> "... I realized that what needed to be done really, was to write a new kind of book, not just personal experience stories that Deaf students had told, but to actually try to convey information to students and so we started the second series of *DeafCAN* readers. The first book of this second series is called 'Introduction to Language' and in it we wound up really going through the history of the language. We ... went back to 80,000 B.C. ... [and back up to] modern day English and in that we really talked about all the ancestors of the English language and then we talked about the development and growth of American Sign Language, where its sources [were] and so on. At the same time, I realized that there needed to be a differently structured vocabulary and something that students could take home with them, homework that they could grab on to. So I also put together this vocabulary booklet that is designed to help people sort of free themselves from the idea of one sign, one, word, which seems to have gotten stuck in a really awful way... I thought the first try at that book was interesting. It's a pain because it takes so long. They look like such easy words. You can't imagine that students are having trouble with them."

She goes on to say:

> "I think for a long time we have thought of bilingual, bicultural education as an end in itself and I think the other piece of the change this year, is that we see that is a method. It's an approach. It's a way of setting up the curriculum environment. It is not a curriculum. And that's made a real difference ... it leads to a doubleness in the learning, so that they're learning about the two languages and at the same time they're learning content for information. It's a shift in focus ... before we foregrounded the ASL and the English issues. Now they're still there, but they are subordinated to the notion that there's information in the world and that the information is of immense value."

When listing the qualities she desired in *DeafCAN* staff members she focused on "flexibility." She described "good signing skills, and knowledge of the Deaf community" as being so "crucial" to the job that they are assumed as requisite qualifications. When describing the need for "incredible flexibility" she said:

> "I mean we may plan certain things and then realize that that's not going to work to catch this group and then I will dream up something at 3 a.m. and the staff is wonderful enough to be willing to go with it. They may have to do job X when they planned to do job Y, but that's why we're a team, is that people are willing to look at it and do whatever they have to do."

When asked if she felt that staff members possessed these qualities Dr. Marsh replied:

> "I guess if they didn't they couldn't have survived, along with the rest of us. I mean they're wonderful, you know, two weeks into the semester we were told that we should open a study skills class. One of the staff members put that class together, is now working on a format, I've re-written a chapter on reading skills for the study group, you know, whatever can get done that furthers the education, people here do. And that's why we're still here."

Echoing the comments of her colleagues, Dr. Marsh identified the problem of lack of cohesion in organizing the program:

> "What we don't have is somebody to tend the store. Somebody to take care of all of the infinite numbers of pieces of paper, the nitty-gritty details. We have a bunch of part-time people that are here ... six ... [or] twenty-five hours a week and over-committed as it is. So there just desperately needs to be order and there isn't any ...".

Dr. Marsh expressed a need for "regularizing the staff so that Deaf people have real jobs instead of pretend jobs. I think that's terribly important." She wants the institution to take on a greater role in supporting the program. She said:

> "... it can't be something that individuals do anymore and I guess this has been a real exciting ten years for me, working on *DeafCAN*. But I'm getting to the place in my own life, my own work, where I see that the institution has to begin to take it up and it has to be structured in a way that other people can come in after me and do what I've been doing because I need time to write and I can't be so active and reflective at the same time."

Dr. Marsh spoke with excitement about the progress of the students, describing the successes and the changes she witnessed in students' "self-awareness" and "self-worth." She talked about three students that had successfully transitioned into Project Bridge classes:

> "... the wonderful things that are happening to them, they were always relatively committed, but as they see themselves now making progress, A. and T. are functioning in hearing classes and I think they could function better if we had better transition support, but I think that what they're getting is very real, at least by the smiles that wreath their faces. And they're starting to put together a newspaper for Bridge. They're working with the Bridge students, the hearing students, on newspapers and you just have the feeling that they're happy as clams ... they really seem to feel that they are going where they want to go. I feel that that's a good thing."

Staff Meetings

Staff members were observed in both *planning*, and *discussion* meetings over the year. Three staff planning meetings were held in December, near the end of the first semester, and during the first week of the second semester. These meetings took place in the *DeafCAN* offices and centered on the collective creation, discussion, and plans for implementation of curricula. Additionally, problems or concerns about individual students or lessons were brought before the group for feedback and discussion. The *discussion* sessions began in early December, and continued through the second semester, occurring almost monthly for a total of four observed meetings. These sessions were generated as a part of staff members' participation in the UCCD project, but were also motivated by their interest in our classroom observations and their potential value for self-analysis and reflection. For each of these meetings samples of the videotaped observations were brought to different staff members' homes where the meetings were held. The samples were shown and they analyzed them in informal discussions that followed. From these discussions often came new ideas for program changes, revelations about staff, teaching styles, and redefinitions of the guiding precepts of the program-- in particular the exact interpretation of a "bilingual/bicultural approach."

Ideological differences among staff members sometimes surfaced or were highlighted during a meeting. In an early December planning meeting, the staff talked about the possibility of using a book in the reading classes that a friend of Dr. Stubb's had written about the life of Anne Frank. The book was also to be produced as a play, and staff discussed the different ways the script, book and play could be used in the reading classes. During this discussion there was an exchange between Mr. Valdez and Dr. Marsh that pointed to some of the differences in their perspectives about students as readers.

Dr. Marsh asserted that: "the students are not capable of reading the script", to which Mr. Valdez countered that it could be rendered in ASL. Dr. Marsh maintained that, regardless, the students "couldn't read it." Mr. Valdez asked her "how she knows" this. At this point Dr. Stubbs suggested that the two lowest level reading groups (Ms. Walton's and Mr. Valdez's) "for certain couldn't read it" but that possibly the highest level (Mr. Stein's) group could. Dr. Marsh provided examples from Mr. Valdez's own class as evidence of her contention that they were not able to read something at the level of the book that had been mentioned. She described the kinds of errors at the decoding level of reading (e.g. mistaking the word "mayor" for "major" in a very simple text) that she had observed in Mr. Valdez's class. She went on to say that students "need to be taught *how* ..." to read. Mr. Valdez again contested Dr. Marsh's assumptions by saying that: "we can't just give up on them ..." that staff "... must support them." By "support", Mr. Valdez meant that he went through the text and explained it to them in sign language. Dr. Marsh asserted that to go through one paragraph in that manner takes about an hour, insinuating that it is not a very effective way to teach students how to read. Mr. Wang agreed with her.

At this point the other staff joined in the discussion, each contributing their ideas on students' reading problems. Ms. Walton maintained that "students don't often possess the schema to be able to understand readings without massive amounts of help and supplementary information", adding that, even as a graduate student, it had taken her almost two years of developing her own schema to understand her textbooks. Mr. Valdez said that students need to "learn more about the history of the world," citing as evidence his students' ignorance about Nazism that had been revealed in his reading class. Mr. Stein agreed that the students "do need information, but at the same time they must do something with that information, not just sit back and passively absorb it. That's not interactive learning," he continued, "it's not the way to really acquire that kind of information." Mr. Valdez suggested that students could try to do some research in the library to access that kind of information, while Mr. Stein interrupted him to say that the students would be "clueless" as to how to accomplish a task like library research. Dr. Marsh offered a clarification of her original remarks: "It's not that I'm criticizing the students, [it's just that] the reason I'm here is to teach reading and I want to make sure that the students would be able to read [a book like the one suggested], not to just leave them to their own devices." Mr. Valdez stated that Dr. Marsh should not say that students "can't read" because he knows that "they can read with the teacher's help and explanations ... it's important to encourage and help them." This exchange proved to be a lively example of the different views staff held about techniques for teaching reading and their students' abilities to read.

During the first discussion meeting, held in early December to talk about the bilingual qualities of the *DeafCAN* program, staff members first talked about what bilingualism meant to each of them and how they felt they used bilingual methods in class. Descriptions of bilingualism varied among staff, from the ability to "code-switch" between languages at will (Ms. Walton), to having proficiency in two distinct languages (Dr. Stubbs). Staff members actively discussed what it meant to be a bilingual, with Dr. Stubbs maintaining: "[being bilingual] means a lot more than just the ability to code-switch." Mr. Valdez described an example of his use of bilingualism as "reading a book in English and then signing it to the class in ASL and explaining the translations to them." The staff continued to try and figure out what strategies could be used to help develop language skills leading to bilingualism. Ms. Sloan raised the issue of sociolinguistic constraints that come into play when students' native language is utilized within the school context. She described the conflicts that come up for students when asked to use their home language in a context where they have traditionally used only the "language of school" (English). Mr. Stein elaborated on Ms. Sloan's point adding that "... although everyone on staff speaks of the program as being bilingual, and even though all the staff use ASL for classroom communication, it is actually English that gets studied, not ASL." He raised the question of whether that truly represents a "bilingual" approach. He said that the students, "even after a few years in the program, still hold ASL in lower esteem than they do English." The staff discussed these and other related issues and later on in the meeting, Mr. Stein proposed a question to the group: "At Laney we all talk about being bilingual, but where do we really do it? Where is the study of ASL? Where is the bilingual aspect?" Several staff members responded to his comments. Dr. Marsh said that: "... somehow something happens with the students. They become better at ASL, they become skilled readers ...". Ms. Sloan said that she did not see students becoming "skilled readers ... not even in the mainstream classes." The discussion continued with Mr. Wang pointing out the "..relationships that are cultivated between teachers and students ... the give and take [between everyone] ..." that makes Laney really special. Amid much laughter from the group, Dr.

Marsh summed up what appeared to be the groups' conclusions by saying, "We are a nice, sweet program. The teachers are sweet, the students are sweet, we love them, they love us-- but that's not necessarily bilingual, so let's not pretend." Ms. Sloan added that:

> "... maybe it's [a program like this] the only one in the world, and there's a lot of power behind that. We support the students in that family feeling, and that is important powerful stuff. It's the most important part of the Laney program, but it's also not enough. It's not enough because I'm not seeing skilled readers or students who can comfortably mainstream come out of it. They're getting closer to that but they need something more than sweet support, despite how important and powerful that stuff is."

This was a good example of the staff examining their notions about the program's central concepts. In both the planning and the discussion meetings there were many instances of staff self-reflection and analysis. Furthermore, the evolution of the ideas generated from some of these discussions could be seen in the curriculum. For example, in response to the point raised by Mr. Stein about the study of ASL in a program that calls itself bilingual, a component on the history and structure of ASL was implemented into the curricula for the following spring semester reading classes. Of course, not all issues raised ended up being fully addressed, and many other less philosophical or programmatic concerns were discussed in meetings.

Viewing tapes of themselves in action also provided a forum for the discussion of teaching methodology, in a way allowing the researched to become researchers. This notion of the participant observer is an artifact of the ethnographic method. When asked during their second interviews what impact the study had, staff members confirmed that the experience had been beneficial. From Dr. Marsh:

> "I think the opportunity that we had to sit down as a staff and not feel that we were exploiting the hourly teachers, but actually being able to buy a little of their[2] time, and sit down and look at what we were doing. I think that made a huge impact on me. For example, hearing that maybe we weren't anything, that maybe we weren't really a bilingual program, that what we really were was a sweet program, that struck a deep chord in me and was one of the things that I think pushed me toward this notion of 'well what in the world does it mean to be a bilingual program and what's the difference between an approach or a method and a curriculum'... I really see that you have to have both a curriculum and you have to have the proper curriculum environment which, for our students, is a bilingual one and it happens to be sign language, but it could just as well be Spanish. So what is actually coming out of the UCCD project, though certainly not your intent, was that I think that we will have a night Project Bridge that will be for lowrider Hispanics. Because now that I understand this principle, it can be adapted to any group-- that you have to open the classroom to their own language, but then you have to really make the movements toward the target with content and not with skill drill."

Ms. Sloan's response to the same question was as follows:

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[2] Staff members were paid by the project for time they invested in the discussion meetings, as well as interview time and time spent helping to collect data for the project in the form of student work samples.

"... it's been helpful to me and I've seen it be helpful to other teachers because everybody's sort of much more aware of what they're doing ... in watching the videotapes that we've been able to watch, and the discussions that we've had around watching those videotapes, has kind of kept the idea sort of forefront-- like what is it that we're doing and where is it that we're going. 'Look isn't that nice how that works and look at all the stuff that could be improved.' That kind of thing. So I think it's definitely had an influence. It feels positive to me. I think that on some level, knowing that it's a long-term project is nice because it makes it feel like there's some permanence and we'll actually be able to see if it works or it doesn't work. Rather than thinking that we have a good idea, but not really having any documentation for it."

Mr. Valdez commented:

"It's influenced me in some ways, yes ... we'd watch selected tapes and discuss them, like say on a section of my class, and I could see how I taught, how I could improve and change, and also just get a look at how I really did things in class. After these discussions, the feedback really helped me, then in consequent sessions I would do the same thing for other staff members. This was a new experience for all of us. That had never happened for me before-- to have a researcher capture exactly what was going on in the classroom and bring it back to look at-- to see myself in that light, I really learned something from it."

Mr. Stein said:

"Yeah definitely [the project affected the program]. It's given us time, time we wouldn't have otherwise taken, to reflect and to meet and talk about things. I think it's made us self conscious in a good way of what we're doing. It's just got us thinking in maybe more introspective or self-analytical kinds of ways, which is all good. And I also think it's maybe been the catalyst for what I started out talking about-- the difference between the hearing and Deaf staff people ... I think it's been a point where I think we've differed greatly. [Interviewer: How so?] The perceptions of what the project is, what we have to do to meet the requirements of the project, and what we should be doing for the project have been very different-- between the way the hearing and the Deaf people have perceived it. If it wasn't an outside thing, I think it would have created some major problems. But since it was an outside thing, I think we were all able to let it slide. Like one group saying, 'we don't agree on this, or they got it wrong, but we'll let it slide because it's not really our thing.' If it was an internal thing that we had to be doing, I think it would have created a lot more problems. I don't know if anyone else would agree with me, but for me, just the fact that we're working on this project together has pointed out to me that issue."

Dr. Stubbs observed that:

"... it's helped us to think more clearly about our goals and look at the program more carefully. I do think the meetings have really helped a lot. One thing is that before we always used to talk a lot about being a 'bilingual program.' That was always in our talk: bilingual this, bilingual that. I think the meetings have forced us to really take a look at what we mean [by that]. [To sort of observe and analyze] what we're doing and also to go

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beyond bilingualism, that's not the only thing here ... I think it also helped us look harder at the way we interact with each other because we watched the videotapes of the students in the classroom and watched, saw how we act, and I think that each of the sharing of styles helped each person to become more aware of his/her own strengths and weaknesses ... Also, all of us came to understand that we have clear goals, but are a little hazy on how to reach those goals...".

Mr. Wang responded:

"Well, it's been good, but the scheduling has been difficult. Scheduling those Friday meetings with the limitations of staff schedules was just impossible, there were always scheduling conflicts. We'd have liked to have all the staff available at the same time, but the scheduling was really difficult, that was one problem. Oh, and when you explained about the [project], I didn't really quite get it, like the [3]data. Like what you needed from us, our teaching, and tests, and the different kinds of data you needed about one student. [Interviewer: Oh, you mean from way back?]. Right from back then, I just spaced it out. I don't know what you wanted, exactly."

From Ms. Walton:

"Well, before the project started, we thought we were doing pretty good, just going along with the course of things, but not being very self-reflective. But then when UCCD came on the scene and you began filming things, suddenly we started paying attention to things in a conscious way. We started having those discussion meetings, talking about whether the curriculum was successful or not, calling into question the bilingual and bicultural aspects of the curriculum, all different parts of the curriculum. Plus, when you asked me to start collecting data for you I started going through it myself and noticing all kinds of things. Things I hadn't seen before and that really got me thinking, and working harder to improve things, I felt more motivated. I feel really grateful to UCCD for providing that turning point, that new view of things. I feel much more positive about how things are going, sort of inspired really. Because here we were pinching every penny just to get by and getting your support was an incentive to work harder and show what kind of stuff we really do here. It was a vote of confidence ...".

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[3] During the first semester of the data collection, staff members were asked to collect samples of student work, exams, class handouts, etc. Additionally, they were asked to record their impressions on the progress of a few of their students over time. Most staff members were unable to provide the data on individual students, or provided only partial information, due to a lack of understanding of what was being requested.

CHAPTER FOUR

The DeafCAN Students

At the beginning of the UCCD study in the fall semester of 1988, *DeafCAN* admitted twelve new students to their ranks. Although observation and collection of various data on *all* students was an integral part of the study, we decided to pay special attention to these new students. Because they were starting their education at Laney as we were beginning our year of observation, we felt that it would be useful to track their progression through the program especially closely. As part of their paid participation in the project, staff members were asked to develop "case study" notes on one or more of these students, recording their progress through the year in greater depth than normally required. Additionally, interviews were conducted with these students just after the end of the first (fall) semester, and again, one year later, in December of the semester following the end of the year of observation. The interview questions were designed to try and get at the students' previous experiences with school, their feelings about the *DeafCAN* program and what it had or had not provided for them, and their language attitudes and perceptions concerning ASL and English. In the first round in January, 1989, we were able to interview ten of the twelve students. The remaining two were unavailable for interviews. During the second round, conducted in December 1989, it was possible to interview only eight of those ten.

The exams, journals, writings, and homework of these students were included in the data that staff members collected for the study. The case study notes were not completed by most of the staff, apparently due to misunderstanding about the nature of the task. The following profiles of the new students are drawn on data from the student interviews, the videotaped classroom and incidental observations, staff participants' notes, and the students' work. Additionally, both these students and staff members were asked to rank order each other according to various criteria such as popularity among students or staff, communication ability, and academic skill. These data are reported where appropriate. Of the original twelve, profiles will be written only for those (ten) students with whom at least one interview was conducted. All of the profiled students come from hearing families.

Before going any further, it is probably appropriate for us to run through the selection processes that were involved in the data collection and reduction that resulted in these profiles. First, in the recording of more than seventy hours of videotape during classroom and non-classroom activities, choices were made on what classes and events to observe and which actions to record. These choices resulted from a combination of advanced planning, expediency, observers' personal bias, and pure chance.

Our conscious plan was to record events from a cross-section of classes and activities at regular intervals throughout the year. We wanted to capture as much of what seemed to be the central focus of activity as possible, while also filming *incidental* activity (e.g. peripheral conversation among students in other parts of the class, students' reactions to classroom events as they happened, etc.). While it was the researcher's goal to film as much as possible of the events within the range of the camera, what eventually ended up on tape was subject to the conscious and unconscious editing of the researcher, prompted ultimately by personal interest, curiosity, and training. Once collected, the video data were reviewed and summarized into a written narrative in order to make them more manageable. These summaries represented another filtering of the original events, subject to the same set of influences as the videorecordings. The summaries themselves were then used as a resource for the construction of this ethnographic report, representing another step in the reduction of the data.

The influence of researchers' biases are present at all these stages of the work. While these influences cannot be eliminated, their potentially negative or distorting effects can be somewhat ameliorated by pointing to their existence up front, and detailing our procedures carefully. The data on the students varied in quantity, detail, and depth, partly as a result of our collection techniques, and partly because some students played a more significant role than others in the *DeafCAN* program.

Rosa Gomez

Rosa Gomez is a young Puerto Rican woman in her early 20s. After her parents divorced, her mother moved with Rosa and her brother to the Bronx, in New York. She attended school there for some years, moving to California with her mother at the age of 14. According to the counselor at Laney, her mother has had a history of "psychiatric problems" for which she was hospitalized on and off over the years. Rosa attended a public high school in San Francisco for a short time and then a private high school with special classes for Deaf students from which she graduated in 1986. In her junior year she had a son. She currently lives with her son and boyfriend, who are both hearing.

After leaving high school, Rosa felt there was still much more to learn, and after encouragement from a friend, Linda Walker, decided to apply for a place at Laney College. Her motivation for attending college was to make a "better future and life" for herself and her son. As she said in her first interview:

> "... I needed to think about the future, and my son's future. When he grows up, and he wants to go to college-- what's he going to do? When that time comes, I want to be able to be a good mother for him, be able to teach him things. If he should be uneasy, I'll be able to fall back on my experience from going to college myself and teach him. I'll have experience with things like classes, different classes, computers-- I'll know all about that. Without Laney I'd just be ignorant, just sort of staying at home, low intellect. I want to be able to teach my son so that he can look up to me and think, 'Wow, mom knows everything.' So, that's why I want to be smart, so I can teach my son what things mean, all sorts of things-- computers, math, a whole list of things. I want to be able to have a good future, and a good job."

In the second interview, Rosa reiterates her feeling that she came to Laney because she had "more to learn." In response to the question, "When you first started at Laney a year ago, what did you want to learn?" she says, "... Really I was just kind of going nowhere, didn't have much to do. I had graduated [from high school], but I felt inside like I needed to learn more." These sentiments are repeated in a journal entry from early February, 1989, "... I need [to] learn more [and] improve a lot [so that]I will [be a] good mother and [a] smart mother ... I need future job in my life. But anyway Deaf can!"

When asked to describe a student they thought had been "successful in *DeafCAN* over the year of observation, four out of seven staff members chose Rosa Gomez. Their individual reasons for viewing her as a success varied in their details, but collectively paint a portrait of a student overcoming fears and becoming an active learner. Ms. Sloan described Rosa as:

> "... Hispanic, a single mother ... really scared about coming to school, not sure how to deal with it, didn't really believe in her ability, but was real motivated and got scared a lot ... was able to use all the resources that were available to her, took

> advantage of them in pretty much a positive way, and began to gain confidence in herself as a student and stuck around ...".

Dr. Marsh described her as:

> "... a single mother, scared to death, used to being a screw-up on her job and school, never done anything with her life, she enters the lowest reading group, begins to take over things like running parties for the program, gets really engaged in the women's group, this year is moved into the top [reading] group, and I presume will be ready to go into the transition program of Bridge in the Spring. I mean, forseeably, that's possible."

Ms. Walton was her reading and writing teacher for the year we observed her. When describing Rosa as successful she says:

> "When she first started school here last year, she was afraid, unsure, she was always saying how stupid she was. She talked a lot about how much she felt she couldn't do because of her failures in high school, her frustrations. As time has progressed I've watched her excitement and sense of discovery about what are hearing ways and Deaf ways, about ASL, about reading and the meanings of things ... It's like she's in this constant state of amazement. I've seen her grow. Also, in the women's group, she's always looking for ways to improve herself, how she can work on herself. In the math class, she recognizes where she's not sure of things and is always actively pursuing how to go about things, asking lots of questions. She'll ask the teacher for permission to help other students in the class, when she gets a concept, whereas before she was always very uncertain, asking timid kinds of questions and very dependent on the teacher ... she has an incredible desire, a thirst for learning. She always wants to know more, it's almost overwhelming, but it's really good, nonetheless."

Ms. Walton's impressions, in particular, are corroborated by our observations in the classroom. Rosa displayed a teacher-like attitude with her fellow students. She encouraged them, and explained or re-interpreted classroom material for them, despite the fact that she was, herself, in the lowest level reading and writing classes. There were numerous examples of these behaviors throughout the year. In a mid-September reading class, Rosa encouraged a reluctant classmate to take a turn telling a narrative in front of the class. Early on, Rosa herself had been reticent to perform on such occasions, but had been coaxed to do so by Dr. Marsh and Ms. Walton. After only a short time she was re-interpreting questions from Ms. Walton for her fellow students. In a single session of one reading class, Rosa took it upon herself to explain a part of the text to one student, clarify a concept to another puzzled student, and define a vocabulary word for someone else. During one writing class, Rosa explained to one student how to go about purchasing their textbook, and for another summarized a homework assignment for the following week. Rosa often helped and coached the other students in the vocabulary work, providing elaborate examples for them of definitions for the items being discussed. These coaching activities increased as the year went by and were especially evident during the reading classes when the students acted out short plays. Rosa would give suggestions about how to interpret a line or phrase from the text into sign, and feedback to her classmates about how to improve their interpretations of the script.

This kind of peer support was something that occurred often in *DeafCAN* classes, and most of the students did it to one degree or another, although none as consistently as Rosa. Sometimes two or three students would turn to help one student who was falling behind. Dr. Marsh described the phenomenon as the evolution of a "community of learners", and it seemed to have a central role in the program's functioning. Rosa went a step further by sometimes taking over as a teacher's helper in class. For example, during a college orientation class she joined the two teachers at the front of the room. Once there, she acted like the teachers, asking the students questions about their background and goals for college, and pulling for further information. On other occasions, she would rush up to the front, and momentarily takeover the class proceedings in order to make her point, clarify, question, or add to what the teacher was saying. This was a reflection of the excitement and energy she brought to her own learning, and she appeared to want to bring the rest of the class along with her. Her help was generally unsolicited, but it was often offered.

Another aspect of Rosa's personality that came across through her classroom behavior was the degree to which she encouraged and empathized with other students. In the first session of the Orientation to College class, Rosa said that she: "wishes they'd offered this class during the fall semester ... when I came here I was so green and had to learn the ropes ... it's good for the new students to have this class to help with that process ...". During a mid-April lab session she spent time chatting and working with one student, encouraging him to "think in a positive way about school." In one session of the reading class, Ms. Walton reminded students that she had already gone through the vocabulary items once, to which Rosa promptly suggested: "... let's all take the initiative to work on the vocabulary for ourselves." During a meeting of the women's support group, she expressed her solidarity with another member who had told the group about being raped, and about difficulties she had experienced with her family. Rosa said:

> "I've felt the same way [as you]. When I was seventeen I was abused and bounced to foster parents. I got pregnant ... it's been a long road from there to becoming more independent ... if you want to be with people or learn [how to become more independent], you can hang with the other students, or me ... my parents thought that I couldn't take care of myself because I'm Deaf ... but Deaf people can take care of themselves and be independent ...".

Another quality of Rosa's was her eagerness to make use of the resources available to her. After describing harassment she had experienced from a man she saw every day, Rosa turned to the women's group for help in dealing with the problem. She solicited strategies from the facilitators and group, rehearsed them, and stated:

> "... [I] want to be able to get and use the help from the other women in the group in order to learn how to deal with these situations better, and become more brave ... I want to be able to fall back on these strategies that I've learned from you all ...".

Rosa gleaned as much as possible from her classes as well. She would often tackle the work even when it was a little above her head. She worked hard to understand the task of translating and interpreting the characters' *mood* conveyed in the short plays they studied, and by the second semester her progress was reflected in the kinds of questions she was asking. For example, in one session the group was being taught how to write glosses for ASL and Rosa asked: "... I know the additional [linguistic] information that the glosses stand for, like how we'd sign it, but how would hearing people interpret the same thing?" An active discussion of these issues followed, after which Rosa commented: "That's interesting-- the way hearing people [would] do it." Later on in the same class she was able to interpret correctly back into ASL phrases written in the notational glosses.

Rosa had a more difficult time, however, keeping pace in the Deaf Culture class, which was conducted along more traditional lines than the reading classes with Ms. Walton. In the Deaf Culture class students had papers to write, a college text to read and present from, and exams and quizzes to contend with. In several sessions of the Deaf Culture class, Rosa appeared confounded by these requirements and expectations. Rosa expressed her insecurity with and distaste for the class, both formally and informally. During her second interview she said:

> "I didn't like the Deaf culture class because it was so hard, because it was at such an advanced level, the outpouring of information and the reading. Sometimes he'd [the teacher] be just going at it and I'd try to ask questions, but it felt like he would just keep adding more on to what he was saying and not really dealing with my questions. After awhile I just sort of gave in and just tried to pay attention and hang with it. But often I'd have to ask other students what he was saying and really get the information from them, kind of like cheating, to help me understand. When [the teacher] would have stuff for us to read, it was kind of like he'd just hand it out and we'd be on our own. At one point there was something we had to read and then stand up and lecture on. I didn't know how to read that stuff, but we had to do it. You have to start and just take it slow, go bit by bit. But when I came into that class it was already at such a high level ... I felt overwhelmed, I wasn't used to that. I'd keep trying to ask my questions but it was hard because some of the students could deal with it, and some couldn't. I had a lot of interest in Deaf culture, Deaf history, that's why I wanted to ask questions, I really wanted to know. When [the teacher] would explain about those kinds of things or show films about how things were in the past, I was just really captivated ... he'd show films about Deaf stuff from history and about the children and this and that, I just loved that, it was really great ... but the work itself in the Deaf culture course was really hard ...".

More informally, after a mid-March session of her reading class, Rosa described to the researcher why she was happy to have a presentation for the Deaf Culture class over and done with:

> "... see you had to follow what was written in the book about the history of Deaf people. I mean, I really liked, I was really taken by watching [the signed] stories about Deaf people and all, that was great. But to go home and do the work to absorb what was in the book and present it in class-- I just couldn't do it. The reading is from a hearing text [mimics the English structure of the text], and it just goes on and on. But what we were supposed to do is take from that text and present it in ASL. I really wasn't into it, it was very hard.[4]"

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[4] We recorded Rosa's first attempt at the presentation for Dr. Stubbs' Deaf Culture class. She appeared flustered, embarrassed, and was very unclear about the process needed to prepare for the assignment. She ended up stopping her attempt at the presentation a few minutes into it, in front of the class. She was told by Mr. Valdez that he would coach her (and her presentation partners) and she could try again later. The completed presentation referred to here was another attempt at the same assignment.

When Rosa did engage in a class like Deaf Culture, where the expectations of students were more traditional, it was almost always on an affective rather than an intellectual level. As she said herself, she was captivated by the history and culture of Deaf people, and she often related the information in class to her own experiences. At other times, even though Rosa attempted all the assignments, her understanding of them or how to go about them was often poor. When she sought clarification or the type of support she was used to from Ms. Walton's classes, her approach clashed with the style of the Deaf Culture class. For example, in one session Dr. Stubbs handed out copies of haiku poetry and gave examples of how to render them in ASL. He assigned the class homework to pick out one or more of the poems and try presenting them in ASL. Rosa attempted to repeat the task back as she understood it, seeking further clarification. She asked if it would be a "process," something where improvement would come gradually with repeated practice. Dr. Stubbs responded that: "[it's not] an improvement kind of thing, [but, rather] a creativity exercise". He provided no further explanation.

Some interesting insight into Rosa's private life and world view emerged from comments she made during her classes. In an early December session of the writing class she said that: "At home I feel sort of unchallenged, so here in the classroom I'm very eager to learn and I feel excited." In the same writing class while they discussed the meaning of the English phrase "What are you doing?", Rosa said that she was really excited to see that phrase in a classroom text because she recognized it from her everyday life as something that her boyfriend always said to her when she was trying to study at home. She used this as a segue to describe how her boyfriend was "nosy and jealous" and that "he's always asking me what I'm doing," whether she was studying, putting on make-up, or reading a note. She continued, with a look of pride on her face, to say: "I take home what I learn from here" and when he "bugs" her by asking her how she learned something she can say "I learned that from college." That was the reason she tried so hard to learn at school.

Lisa Corazon

Lisa Corazon is a young woman in her early twenties. She was born and raised in the Philippines, and graduated from high school before moving with her family to the United States. Soon after arriving here, she started at Laney.

By her own account, Lisa's experiences at Laney have been markedly different than those at school in the Philippines:

> "In the Philippines, Deaf people can't hold jobs as teachers, they're not accepted for those jobs. They're thought of as incapable and less intelligent ... [here at Laney] Deaf people can teach classes ... and other things. I've found out that it's very different ... There weren't any interpreters, you can't pay attention without interpreters, you can't understand what's going on. The teachers didn't like interpreters so they were eliminated ... I didn't enjoy [school] at all. There was no signing there, there were very few Deaf people there-- only three of us, everyone else in the school was hearing ... I didn't understand [the teachers]. They would write on the blackboard to communicate but I didn't understand the meanings of the vocabulary that they used. The Deaf students would ask each other what the teachers meant ...".

From what Lisa had to say in her second interview, she clearly felt she had benefitted from the *DeafCAN* program. Early in the interview she commented: "[My] writing is lousy, but the teachers, you have to snag one of them, and they'll help you make revisions and work on it." She went on:

> "... I just adore [my writing class]. It used to be that I was just really incapable of writing, the teacher couldn't understand what I wrote. Then I tried, from the very beginning, to first write what I wanted to say in a very structured, orderly fashion, not just in some haphazard way across the page, then I'd turn that in. Stuff like my opinion, or the teacher's opinion, or a fictional story, and then turn that in, and my teacher was just so taken with what I wrote. She said that she was just captivated by what I wrote, and how beautiful it was. I didn't know I could do that (laughing), because before I was so bad at it, I guess I've really made some improvement, really gotten better."

She expressed a similar sentiment about her experiences in the computer class. In her first interview Lisa said that the computer class was her favorite:

> "This is my first time, I'd never been exposed to [computers] before. Now I'm starting to see how they work, I was really dense about how to work them, but it's okay now, I really enjoy it, I'm really improving. It's fun ... there are games you can play that are fun, and there's another language-- BASIC-- a beginning computer language."

By the second interview, writing was her favorite course, but her experiences in the computer class seem to have had an impact on Lisa's sense of potential:

> "I never knew anything about [computers] before, in the Philippines they didn't have any. So, at first, I just said, 'I can't do that,' you know, getting the computer to work. And [Mr. Wang] was very emphatic, 'Oh yes you can,' he'd tell me. We went back and forth like that, with me saying, 'it's impossible, there's no way,' and him saying that I could. So I decided to just give it a go and *see* what happened. I sat myself down at the keyboard and I was just dumbfounded. It worked, I could do it. I thought I wasn't able to, but I was! I saw that when I gave it a try, when I took the initiative and just sat down and tried it out, not calling on the teacher, but working at it myself, that I understood how to work it and I really made progress. I thought a Deaf person couldn't do that, but to my surprise, I could!"

In contrast Lisa felt somewhat at a loss in both her reading and math classes. Part of the problem with the math was her limited education in the Philippines:

> "It's just that I never really went to like elementary school, [the school/her class] was small, and the teacher just taught us simple stuff like addition and subtraction, like at a first grade level. I really wish that we had been taught more difficult stuff with numbers, but it was just the simple things. By the time I got to high school, I wished that I could go back and work my way up to the high school level stuff-- to be ready for that. But when I got to high school it was already too late and it's a real struggle for me now ... I feel like I haven't really improved."

She complains in both of the interviews of failing the chapter-end math quizzes and tests in class, and felt that there was not enough support in the math class to help bring her up to par. In the second interview, after describing her frustration with failing and having to repeat work in the math text she said: "I wish there was someone who could help me, but [there isn't anyone] ... Some of the teachers don't know math, others do but are busy helping all of the students, tutoring them, so I'm kind of left on my own."

> She described feeling out of step in Mr. Stein's reading class:
> "... it's really difficult for me to understand sentences and paragraphs [when I read them]. The teacher will ask me what a particular part means, and I'm just at a loss, I can't say anything. I don't know what it means, or what's between the lines. I really don't know."

It appears that Lisa had trouble with Mr. Stein's teaching style. However, she was able to provide an eloquent introspective analysis of the problem:

> "[Mr. Stein] signs too fast. But I try to beat him to the punch, sort of trick him, like I'll stop him and say that I don't understand [the passage, the text, the question or whatever piece they're working on]. He'll explain it to me, then I can sort of take advantage of that extra information in his response. Then he'll ask me what I think it [the text] means, and I'm at a loss. But it's sort of like put upon me to figure out what it means, I don't really get any help, it's a kind of *you're on your own* thing. I kind of got an idea about how this operates in class and I wanted to confirm my suspicions. I watched as this one other student very confidently signed their response, and the teacher was really helpful and supportive to that student. Then it sort of dawned on me, the difference between me and that student. The reason the teacher didn't want to give me so much of that was because I was sort of exploiting it, using what he gave me to answer the question, instead of thinking on my own, like copying an answer, using someone else's ideas ... [by "exploiting it" I mean] that the teacher just **gives** you the answer, instead of, you should be using your own brain to think and be able to get the answer and write it down yourself."

> Despite this seeming mismatch of styles, Lisa did not quit:

> "... I keep at it, fighting, struggling with it until I finally get it and understand a word, or get the picture and the whole thing becomes clear to me. Then I'll check to see if I really do understand and raise my hand with confidence to tell the teacher what I think, and he confirms that what I thought was right (smiles)."

This struggle exemplifies Lisa's overall experiences with the program, which are a mix of good and bad. In general she is positive about the writing and computer classes, yet somewhat frustrated by reading and math. When describing the program in general in the second interview, Lisa said: "There's some good [parts] and some bad." When pressed on the point she explained that the "teachers are good, [and] they have a good program," but that "Deaf culture" itself "is really strange." She went on:

> "A lot of the students have some real problems, they gossip a lot and I really don't like that. I can't just put that out there, but I sort of feel like backing off and maybe going to another college. But I'd just keep that to myself and suffice to say there are

some good parts and some bad parts ...".

This tension between the good and the bad is reflected in a later statement from the second interview, when she was asked what she was looking to learn upon first coming to Laney:

> "I could see that there was a lot of really good assistance here and I really liked that ... when I think about transferring out to another place, I think it's really going to throw me off-- without anyone to tutor me. Here they have that kind of help, tutors and everything all as a part of the program."

This contradicts her earlier comment that there was too little tutorial help or assistance for her in her math class. One teacher suggested that her contradictory view of her own experiences may stem from a "lack of confidence" in herself.

Over the year we observed Lisa actively working in the math and daily labs either on her own, or in small groups or tutorials with staff and/or other students. The conflicts expressed in her interviews did not really come to light during these observations. She appeared popular among staff members and students, as evidenced by the rankings they assigned her.

Steve Atkins

Steve Atkins is a white man in his early 30s. He was raised in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, in towns and rural areas. According to Steve, he attended "many different schools," and used oral methods of communication. He left high school to attend the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, N.Y. for one year, and received a certificate in Photography. He then returned home to North Carolina only to find himself unable to get a job without a high school diploma. He returned to high school and graduated in the winter of 1978. He lived in various locations in the South, holding odd jobs. He eventually moved to California.

Steve found his school years very trying. In his first interview he describes his experiences in high school:

> "They were awful! People really harassed me because I was Deaf. I was the only Deaf student, all the rest of them were hearing. I used hearing aids, they teased me about that, I had long hair, they called me a woman, always harassing me. I was in a lot of fights in school. It was an awful time, that one year in that [high school] classroom."

Steve said that his reason for coming to Laney was because he had been "fired from [his] job and [he] decided to go back to school and get a new major." He continued: "Before I had always worked blue collar jobs, manual labor, that sort of work. I needed to find a white collar job, and that's what I'm learning from here." Steve reflected during the second interview that his original intention in coming to Laney was to go into drafting, but later he changed his mind:

> "... my goal [now] is to work with computers ... In drafting, it's really hard to find a job, but in computers, you could find tons of work in town somewhere, so I think I'd like to go into computers."

When asked in the original interview to compare his prior experiences in school with his initial experiences at Laney, Steve said:

> "It's different. I'm more comfortable, it's more flexible with Deaf people. I like meeting more Deaf people. It was a different story when I was at the hearing school, I was the one and only Deaf person. I was at a loss ... I need to be more comfortable-- around Deaf people-- it's better, things are more clear, it's nicer. In my other schools I had no interpreters until I was a senior in high school, then I finally got an interpreter ... I can lipread very, very well, but I can't hear a thing. Now I've thrown my hearing aids away (laughing) ... I can catch everything that's being said when Deaf people sign."

Steve felt that his experiences in the hearing high school also had had a negative effect on him academically. In his second interview he talked of his present trouble in the reading class:

> "... [it's] because I couldn't read before, I was in a hearing high school, and reading was very confusing, sort of all over the place, it was never clear to me. I could sort of follow the gist a little bit."

When asked to describe a successful student in *DeafCAN* during their interviews, Ms. Sloan, Dr. Marsh, and Dr. Stubbs all mentioned Steve. Ms. Sloan prefaced her remarks by saying that "this is all coming from my counseling perspective," and continued:

> "but he had a real attitude problem which is still evident. You can still see it, but we were able to work with him and show him that, he came in with the 'I can't do it' attitude and we told him that he could and that he needed to change his attitude in order to do it. That we believed in him and he needed to believe in himself and we had several staff meetings with him, you know, like three or four staff would meet with him and I could see when the light finally went on. And he's hooked into the program. It's really important to him. He's back this year and he's able to work within a group and he's great ... he has a job, got a job, it's great."

Dr. Marsh described him as having "tremendous numbers of defenses," saying:

> "He came in challenging every teacher on every count for the whole first six months. And then this year, on the first day he started the challenge routine again and I said 'Hey, [Steve], why are you asking the tutor what you need to do? Trust yourself. You know what you need to do.' And the fact that he could hear me and do it shows the kind of transformation that I think is taking place in him."

Dr. Stubbs described him as "one of the biggest success stories." According to Stubbs:

> "He arrived here in September, well really he was evaluated in June. He showed up with this wild mass of hair, dressed in a t-shirt full of holes, wearing a jacket, he looked horrible, he looked like a street person ready for a handout ... He took the evaluation, and, his language was just, well he didn't have any English sentence structure, things didn't make sense, he couldn't remember signs, just a mess. [We] decided to take a gamble and see what happened. Well, it was just one problem after

> another. He wouldn't be a part of the class, really outside of the team, he didn't understand what sexual harassment meant, he'd always be using obscene language. So, we all kept on his case and with a mixture of confrontation, support, scolding, and meetings over time, he finally came around and is now one of the best students in the *DeafCAN* program. In one year he's totally turned around. He's a different person, not the same person at all. Makes you wonder. There are still many things that don't work for him, but it seems that he feels comfortable with the support given here, and he feels a part of the class, he's found an identity again ... [Steve] doesn't accept other students well, so he tends to work more closely with adult Deaf people, so he feels comfortable talking with other Deaf adults. I think it's a kind of respect, a mutual respect, or a recognition that Deaf people have positive qualities ... he's an older student, attended NTID some time ago, so maybe he feels bad that his life didn't turn out the way he wanted. He was a photography major at NTID, then he just went out into left field, worked as a busboy, he's had some really strange jobs, the quality of his life hasn't been good. Now, he seems better."

Not all the staff shared these sentiments about Steve, nor did they see much of value in Steve's behavior while the year was in progress. It was in the second interview that he was mentioned as being a "success." Earlier in the year during various staff meetings and informal discussions, all of the staff described their frustration and anger with Steve's behavior. Furthermore, Steve did not hold staff members in very high esteem either. In his initial interview, Steve expressed relief that he had not had Dr. Stubbs for a teacher yet, referring to him in a very derogatory way, and saying that he felt "put off" by Stubbs' manner. Apparently Steve's feelings changed after taking Dr. Stubbs' Deaf Culture course and interacting with him, as indicated by Stubbs' remarks, and Steve's behavior in his classroom. His dislike for Mr. Stein and Stein's style in the classroom seemed to persist throughout the observed year. During Steve's second interview (one semester after the year of observation) he said:

> "... [Stein] says that he's a serious teacher, but really he's not ... he's always playing around and provoking and yakking. I feel like, 'what's the trip here?' I really get mad at him. I'm tired of him, it's the same old thing over and over-- one point that the Deaf students will miss gets repeated over and over again. It's enough to lull you to sleep ... it's a drag, last year I wasn't with [Stein], I was with [Valdez], and that was fine. But now this fall semester with [Stein], I'm just bored with him."

During that same fall semester (the following semester after the year of observation), Steve scored relatively high on his reading mid-term exam (relative to the other students in the class), yet he wrote insulting remarks to Mr. Stein in the essay portion of the test. On the year-end student report summarizing work over the course of the year of observation, Dr. Marsh commented: "Your tests showed deep understanding-- parts are excellent. You did not read well in the fall. You read better now." Steve's record of completing assignments in the computer, reading and Deaf Culture classes showed a commitment to the work, but improvement in quality was not as evident.

Whenever we observed Steve in the classroom, he sat in the same spot in the room, somewhat apart from the rest of the class, with his feet up on the desk or a chair in front of him. Regardless of his level of participation in the class activities, Steve was always in this posture of distance from the other students. When he was in a classroom with a more intimate physical set-up, Steve would assume an argumentative or disgusted attitude. For example, in an early February session of the

Orientation to College class, when Ms. Sloan and Ms. Walton were trying to help students develop a studying schedule, Steve demanded an explanation as to why the students should need to do this. When Ms. Sloan tried to explain the purpose of the activity, Steve insisted that his schedule was too variable to come up with any regular times that he did things, including homework or tutoring. He appeared more interested in complaining about his roommate, or insisting on the variability of his schedule than working out what Ms. Sloan was trying to do with him. He didn't want to fill out the schedule and was resistant to anything Ms. Sloan or Ms. Walton tried to suggest. During a discussion in an early February session of the math class, Steve pouted when he was not called upon by the teacher, cursed to himself, and generally acted frustrated. In an early October session of the computer class, while the class was correcting a quiz they had just taken, Steve remarked about his inability to spell the words from the quiz correctly, and made known his growing disgust for the task. When Mr. Valdez asked the class if they were "frustrated" by the quiz, Steve said: "I just can't make it right-- my brain [can't do it]."

Steve generally participated in the classes, joining in on discussions and taking part in the activities. For example, in an early December session of the computer class when a comparison was made between a computer and the brain, Steve came to the front of the class and gave his interpretation of Mr. Wang's explanation and the class's subsequent discussion. In the lab classes, Steve usually studied alone, but in an early December session he worked with Lisa Corazon, helping her with the parts that were giving her trouble. In another session of the computer class, during a pre-test review, Steve was observed actively discussing a question related to computers' central processing unit with the teacher, the aide, and two other students. In the late April session of the English class that was designed to imitate a medieval "mead hall," all the students were assigned roles to play. Steve played a "warrior" and had to deliver his "report" to the "king" [Mr. Valdez], which he did with much enthusiasm. During another combined session of the reading class where students were learning how to gloss ASL signs and read the glosses, Steve spontaneously went to the front of the room to write the appropriate notation for a particular sign. In a late May session of his reading class with Mr. Valdez, students were presenting reports on someone they had chosen as a "hero." Steve was very serious and involved when he delivered his report on "Sergeant York".

In spite of, or perhaps in addition to, his participation in the classes, his antagonism and distance in these classes persisted, particularly during the first semester of observation. His hostility and/or frustration, when not acted out, seemed often to be just below the surface. The staff discussed their anger and frustration with Steve's behavior a number of times throughout the year. For example, during a staff meeting between Mr. Stein, Mr. Valdez, and Ms. Walton in early February, Mr. Stein, in particular, expressed his frustration with Steve's hostility and rudeness. In mid-February, informally, in the Deaf Services office, Dr. Stubbs, Ms. Walton and Mr. Stein discussed the topic again. They described Steve as "rude ... obnoxious ... mean to other students, ... and insulting to staff." All of them appeared fed up with him at this point and talked of being ready to ask him to leave the program. Sentiments similar to these were expressed by staff at other meetings and points throughout the year.

As Dr. Stubbs mentioned, Steve's attitude appeared to "turn around" later in the year. Most particularly in the Deaf Culture class, but also in the evening writing class, Steve displayed almost none of the hostility and frustration previously observed. In the Deaf Culture class, Steve was engaged in the discussions, activities, group work, and assignments, sitting among the class members, rather than off in a corner. During a mid-April session of the class, Dr. Stubbs conducted a lengthy, in-depth discussion with the class about the purposes of theater and what theater "allows for." Steve's face (and those of other students) reflected what looked like appreciation and a comprehension of the concepts Stubbs was trying to get across to them. Steve commented that he "got it." During a late April session of the class, Stubbs was leading a discussion, generated from a National Theater of the Deaf performance, concerning the difficulties Deaf children of hearing parents have feeling a part of things in the family. Steve got very involved in this discussion, and looked riveted to what Dr. Stubbs was saying. He then commented that he had felt that same sense of isolation and confusion about events around him that weren't explained. He went on to talk about how terrified and lost he felt when his parents left him at the oral school he first attended as a child. In the sessions where Dr. Stubbs gave the class haiku poetry to be translated into ASL, Steve performed his versions of the poetry before the other students, and Dr. Stubbs used it, along with a few other students', as examples for the rest of the class.

It's difficult to say what may have spurred the change in Steve's behavior. It could be due to a number of factors (e.g. the level of academic challenge, degrees of respect for the teachers involved, affective changes over time, etc.) From our observations, the changes were mostly evident in Dr. Stubbs' Deaf Culture class, and to a lesser degree in spring semester combined sessions of Dr. Stubbs' and Mr. Valdez's writing class. This was somewhat ironic, given the distaste Steve expressed for Dr. Stubbs in his first interview near the end of the fall semester. The difficulties between Mr. Stein and Steve, however, appeared to persist through the year of observation and well into the following semester.

Linda Walker

Linda Walker is a Black woman in her early twenties. She attended Deaf classes in a hearing high school for a year and then spent three years at the local school for the Deaf, where she graduated shortly before starting at Laney. She continued to live at home with her family while attending the *DeafCAN* program. At one point she moved out of her parents' home, only to return a short while later.

In her interviews, particularly the first one, Linda was overwhelmingly positive about the *DeafCAN* program and enthusiastic about what she felt she had gained from it. Furthermore, she appeared to transmit this enthusiasm to other students in the program. We often observed her helping, tutoring, or lending other kinds of support to her fellow students. In her interview with us, Rosa Gomez cited Linda's encouragement as the reason she began attending Laney to begin with.

In her first interview, Linda described *DeafCAN* as a "good program ... a great program." When asked what that meant, she replied:

> "... they have Deaf teachers, they have self-paced learning, enthusiasm for class is developed, they have the *DeafCAN* program and you can attend hearing classes if you want, they have interpreters. It's wonderful, it's really good."

In fact, in almost all of her responses to questions in the first interview, Linda used the adjectives "good," "great," or "wonderful" to describe the program, classes, or teachers. Of her school experiences before attending Laney, she said:

> "Some of it was difficult because there were no interpreters. To communicate with hearing people I had to write back and forth or try to lipread and speak ... at [the

> school for the Deaf] we were all Deaf, everyone signed, the teachers were Deaf, of course, it was easy to understand everything clearly."

And on the comparison between secondary school and Laney:

> "They're different in comparison ... [the school for the Deaf] was like *kid stuff*, I didn't really like high school. At Laney things are more developed, there's more learning-- in different classes and all. It's really great ... there's all these different things for different interests, like they invite people here-- like from [a nearby state university that has a program for Deaf students] to explain steps you'd take to enroll there if you'd like to, but I wouldn't want to. I want to stay here at Laney-- at *DeafCAN*, this is a better program here ...".

When asked what she felt she had learned in the program over the course of the year Linda said:

> "I've learned a lot here. Like writing, I've learned a lot about how to improve my writing, like with words. Finding out that the words have all different kinds of meanings, a whole list of them. That's been really interesting. Then there's how to write using paragraphs, like taking a story that you've created, say about your life, well maybe not your life, but things that have happened, writing about them, like an earthquake or whatever, different things, just writing more and you really improve, it's good, really wonderful."

Linda's opinion on how to improve the program changed over the course of the year. At the beginning, Linda discussed how different students had different needs, and felt that the classes should be grouped accordingly:

> "Sometimes they need help or tutoring paced more slowly ... sometimes when the teacher signs really fast in ASL these students get lost-- it's hard for them. So it might be better if the teacher could slow down some and simplify, or sign in ASL more slowly or condense things ... Some of the students use a very basic sign language, they don't quite understand. But I try to tutor and encourage them, help them improve ... Some students really get it, others are still a little lost, it depends on the student. They're all very different, I've noticed this in class, from watching, they're not homogenous, they have different ways of signing ...".

To this, the interviewer responded: "So do you mean that you think one way of improving the program would be to group students so that the slower students could be helped in different ways from the quicker students?" Linda confirmed that this was what she had meant.

A year later, however, Linda had apparently changed her views. She said:

> "I wish we had just one big class, not all the separate little groups like we do. I'd like to have one class with all of us in it doing the same stuff, all of us into the same lecture or whatever, done nice and clear, you'd know just what the class involved ... I understand [that breaking the class into groups with three teachers] is an easier way to do it, that's fine, it's pretty good, I don't mind them breaking it down into three

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> groups. But I really do enjoy all the input of the group ... people who are confused or don't understand are in one group ... students [who] are at an average level [are in another group], others are really advanced, signing really fast ... some sit almost catatonic ... For me, fast or slow, it doesn't really matter, whatever, I don't mind, I like that."

She goes on to say that she also would like for there to be more aides and tutors, particularly for the math class, and that more interpreters are needed as well:

> "I wish the math class had more clear explanations, and I wish there were more aides in the class, more assistants. [Wang and Valdez] just don't have enough time, they're really busy and [Valdez] is dealing with the interpreters, so that's a problem. They do what they can, going around the class to help students, but there's always more hands up than students being helped, so there's a lot of confusion. [Wang and Valdez] can only do so much, so I wish we could have more aides, but that's the breaks ... I wish we had more interpreters, and expand, like I like art, or drafting, different stuff. We need more, want more, but really there are only a few, we need to add more, to keep busy, keep up."

Linda was very appreciative of Mr. Valdez as a teacher. In both interviews she praised his skill in communicating with students and attributed her enjoyment of the reading class to him:

> "... my favorite class [is] reading because [Valdez] explains everything so clearly, in ASL. He teaches using a lot of good examples, we read and find out the meanings of different things, he explains them. It's really good the way it's taught, it's my favorite ... [he's] more expressive [than Dr. Stubbs], uses dramatics and some incredible signing. He's really a wonderful teacher, really good."

And of Valdez in the writing class:

> "... my teacher was a teacher's aide-- [Mr. Valdez]. He taught us different things like signing using ASL, improving our signing that way and writing and how to improve our English writing. I learned a lot, it was good, I got better at writing English."

At the end of the year Linda still named Valdez as: "very much my most favorite" teacher. When asked why, she explained:

> "Because he gives such good clear explanations of things, like, he uses a lot of examples to demonstrate different meanings of things. He doesn't just throw a quick and dirty explanation at you and that's the end of it. He gives you so much more--with stuff that happened, using good clear explanations, he's very involved in it. He makes it really clear for me a lot."

When asked to define "clear explanations", Linda replied: "I mean that he gives me an image that makes sense to me, like a picture, through his actions, and then I really get it, I understand in a snap what he means."

In the classroom, Linda routinely immersed herself in the activities, often helping other (particularly new) students with everything from solving math problems, explaining dialogue journals, going over work missed by a latecomer, and simply offering encouragement. Linda was particularly involved in the reading and writing classes, especially with issues of translation between ASL and English. On one occasion she was observed explaining English idioms in ASL for another student. On another occasion Linda was observed to come to the front of the class and go over the English example at hand, showing where the equivalent ASL signs and glosses correlated with the particular parts of the sentence being translated.

In both of her interviews, when asked what her goals were after completing the program, Linda said that she wanted to get a job. In the first interview she said her goal was to "... be a typist in a business, maybe like an office, or data processing-- using computers and go[ing] on from there ...". By the second interview, she said that her goal was:

> "... to be able to get a job. I haven't decided in what area yet, so I'm pretty open, to do different kinds of jobs ... but I need to figure out how to live on my own-- to have an apartment, for my future, to be able to live my life without my parents ... I need to learn a lot more so I have experience to deal with my life, I don't want to have to be dependent."

Bobby Brandon

Bobby Brandon is a white Deaf man in his early thirties. His hearing impairment was misdiagnosed as retardation when he was a child and he was institutionalized by his mother. He lived at times with his grandmother and mother in Virginia, but was considered retarded for the first seventeen years of his life. He attended high school in the local state hospital and left without graduating. As an adult he moved to California. After attending the *DeafCAN* program for three semesters (including the year of observation), his psychological problems seemed to be causing more and more disruption in his ability to function at school. Bobby left the program before the second interview could take place, so this profile is based on one interview and observational data.

In both of her interviews, Ms. Walton described Bobby as one of the program's successes. Early in the year she said:

> "... people thought of him as retarded for seventeen years of his life. He never went to school, had no real peers. He made excuses for continuing to think of himself as a failure and trained to become a janitor. He came [here] with an attitude of 'I can't, I can't.' With reading, writing and math I tried to focus on what he could do. We worked with him, encouraged him. He insisted he just couldn't read. He would read word by word, then in sentences, and now he reads better than some of the other students in the group. He thought of himself as retarded, had a terrible self-image, and was very negative about everything. Now his attitude has totally changed. He's feeling healthy and is ready to move on in his life-- a lot of progress there. He doesn't want to be a janitor any more-- he asked me the other day if I thought he could take a science class."

In the second interview, she described Bobby as having been:

> "... always so prone to acting out, and he still is, but I've noticed that he **really wants to learn**. He has a difficult time maintaining a positive affect, it usually comes out in a negative way ... he really struggles. I try to encourage him to be patient and persevere with the process. Now he seems more willing to try ... he's really improved in a lot of ways. He hasn't let his personal problems stop him. He's incredibly motivated, he really, really wants to learn. Sometimes his personal problems get in the way, but he just struggles onward, that's what I've seen from him."

Many of the staff had a difficult time dealing with Bobby, although he spent most of his time with Ms. Walton in her reading and writing classes. He was ranked very low by all staff on academic and communicative ability, English skills, and popularity. He was also ranked low on popularity by his fellow students.

In class, Bobby often came across as brash, rude, sulky, or otherwise inappropriate and disruptive. In Ms. Walton's classes he often acted out and demanded attention, but at other times was cooperative and well-intentioned. In one session of the reading class, he had a disagreement with a classmate that turned into a full-blown argument, after which he sat and pouted, refusing to participate any further in the rest of the class. A couple of months later during a math class, Bobby held the floor in order to explain what an apartment deposit is for. Though initially invited up by Ms. Walton, Bobby long outstayed his welcome talking about only marginally related issues and attempting to conduct the class himself. Ms. Walton was unable to regain the direction of the class without literally "kicking" him jokingly off center-stage in order to make him sit down.

Sometimes, however, he seemed genuinely to want to explain something to the class. He often tried to be helpful to his fellow students, providing feedback, suggestions, critiques or encouragement, particularly in the reading class. On one occasion he joined with his classmates in trying to explain the meaning of a word to Jean Ramirez. Later on he stood with Ms. Walton in front of the class and explained the distinction between the terms "health care" and "health club". At other times we observed him explaining the lesson to a fellow student (unbidden), again helping Jean Ramirez act out the lines of a play, assisting new students in the reading class, and translating a sentence into ASL for a fellow student.

When Bobby was disruptive, Ms. Walton often admonished him as one would a child. He frequently stated in class that things were too difficult for him, and he usually lagged behind the others. In combined reading classes, Ms. Walton sometimes sat next to him, providing one-to-one support.

When asked about his previous school experience, Bobby said:

> "It was different. It was an all hearing school, no interpreters, I was really in a bind. People would speak, I wouldn't understand school, so I left school ... high school was horrible. There were fights all the time, it was an awful school, I was not at all happy there-- so I dropped out."

When asked what made him decide to come to Laney, Bobby said:

> "Because my mind had really stagnated. I was stuck at home, lonely, nothing to do,

> no friends, or communication, or socializing. I was just really stagnating. I felt very sad, indeed. The mental stagnation was getting worse. That's why I realized I needed to come to Laney College-- to build my mind back up."

When asked which class was his favorite, he replied that "all of them" were. When asked which class he felt was a "drag" he said that the only drag was "the other Deaf students." In describing what he would like to change about the program to make it better, he said:

> "... the Deaf students act like kids ... they won't grow-up ... I don't want to preach at them. If I tried to reason with them in that way most of them would just ignore it anyway with some line like 'Oh Billy's going off again.' Same as the way a teacher would deal with it. So I'm not into it, it's not my, not my-- they're not my children. But what I can do is change myself-- that's all."

As to his goals beyond *DeafCAN*, he said:

> "For my future, my goal is to be in photography. But I have to buy my own camera. But that's my own goal, I want to get an A.A. degree or a G.E.D. That's my goal, that's what I want."

Jean Ramirez

Jean Ramirez is a Hispanic woman in her mid-twenties. She attended various elementary, junior high, and high schools with special programs for Deaf students in San Francisco. After graduating from high school, she stayed at home with her husband and young son for "seven years of basically hanging around the house." She said she felt isolated and lacking in communicative and academic development. In an attempt to improve her signed and written communication, she began attending the *DeafCAN* program.

Jean was mainstreamed into public school programs with hearing teachers that, if they signed at all, used SEE signs. She described her high school as:

> "... really lousy. There were two teachers and they couldn't sign much, they were just really [uncommunicative]. At [my elementary and junior high schools] they used sign language pretty well, but at [the high school] they were pretty crummy. I had to just put up with it ... They didn't help me hardly at all. A very little bit, that's all. They were always very busy with their own stuff."

When asked why she came to Laney, Jean replied:

> "After I finished school I just stayed home for about seven years. All I did was just hang around the house, I didn't read or really do anything, just sort of bided my time. My husband, well, I have to respect him, he wants me to respect him and listen to him, like keeping the house up and cleaning and all. Later it seemed that he saw I was understanding less and less of what things meant-- like words and vocabulary-- after seven years in the house, and then he sort of accepted the idea more of me going back to school. I didn't understand friends who hung out and used ASL, I didn't understand anything I read. That's why now ... I've come to school at Laney."

Maintaining her role as a housewife, however, was a priority for Jean. On the subject of time commitment to the program she said:

> "Well, I want to come part-time not full-time because it would be too hard to come here full-time and be a housewife at the same time. So it's better for me to be here part-time and then be a housewife the rest of the time."

When asked if she socialized with other students in the program, her reply was:

> "Not much, only a little bit because of my husband and family. That's the reason ... If it [socializing at school] was an every day thing my husband, well, like if I had this great time signing and stuff with friends it might change my mind and I'd just talk to my husband only a little bit. I have to respect my relatives and my husband."

When Jean did socialize with other students, she used the experience as an opportunity to learn or gain more exposure to language. When asked if students tended to do things together outside of the classroom, she responded: "Do you know [Lisa], the Filipino girl? She's very nice, we talk, she tells stories from church, I like that, *she teaches me things*, it's nice." By the end of the year it was still important for her to spend most of her free time at home: "Let's see, do I go out in a group, no, I mostly stay at home". However, when asked if she liked to socialize with the students she said: "I like to mingle, to mix with them ... while hanging out *I learn signing from them*, take stuff in, absorb it."

From her own comments, as well as from observations of her behavior in class, it appears that Jean was gaining a lot from her experiences in the program over the course of the year. In the beginning Jean often appeared confused or lost in class. She seemed to have a difficult time following what was going on, both in terms of the signing and the classroom activities and dynamics. She arrived at the program using SEE signs, and was constantly exposed to and confronted with ASL in her reading and writing classes with Ms. Walton. Often her SEE signs were "corrected" by Ms. Walton and the other students. Over time, her communication and confidence in her ability to learn and communicate seemed to improve. One of the teachers remarked on this at the end of the year:

> "She was just an airhead [when she came here] ... and she's still kind of ditzy, but she's going places. She has a lot more direction, she has a lot more friends. It's still early with her, but I've seen a change in the last year, and she's going to be around for another year or two at least, and I think, well ask me again next year about [Jean] (laughs)."

When asked if coming to Laney had changed anything for her, she said: "Yes, I'm learning vocabulary and signs." When invited to comment on her teachers, she said:

> "[They're] different, very different [relative to prior school experiences]. They use ASL. It's different signing. They sign and I learn. Like when a new word comes up they use ASL and I really learn-- learn ASL like that."

At the end of the year, while reflecting on why she had come to Laney, she said:

> "Because I wanted to learn English, and signing, to practice the fluency of my signing

> ... Last year, oh I was such a terrible signer, I felt like a baby just starting. I had used SEE signs, but the teacher here told me that I should use ASL, so I started out pretty slow, but I've gotten just faster and faster (smiling)."

We observed her attempts to participate in classroom activities, particularly in Ms. Walton's first semester classes, but although she always seemed to be trying to follow what was going on, she was rarely on target. She seemed usually a pace or two behind the rest of the class, her questions, answers, and comments showing her to have misinterpreted and misunderstood much of the information. She gave the impression of someone groping in the dark. However, even in her first semester she never gave up, continuing to participate in the discussions and activities, even when the quizzical or lost look on her face betrayed that she was not really following what was going on.

One of the many examples of this occurred in a session of Ms. Walton's reading class. Jean was a few words behind the rest of the class as they went over vocabulary items in preparation for acting out the short plays. Later, Jean tried to play her part, but clearly did not understand what she was reading. Other students helped Jean, as they so often did, with a word that had already been discussed. When she began to deliver a line from the script she used a SEE sign that was corrected by Ms. Walton while the other students gave her suggestions for alternative signs. This same pattern happened with each of her lines. Ms. Walton would first come before the class and model how the line should be interpreted into signs, explaining the process as she went. After Ms. Walton demonstrated the example with another student, Jean seemed to understand, and the students performed the script again with everyone being very supportive of Jean's effort.

By mid-March, things seemed to be somewhat different for Jean. In one reading class with Ms. Walton, the class was translating and discussing ASL equivalents for various English words. Jean appeared very self-assured in her answers, and she no longer displayed the perpetually lost demeanor from the earlier days. She became actively engaged in a discussion with a fellow student on how you can tell if your answers are right or wrong, suggesting an awareness of learning strategies that she may have acquired over the year.

Most of the time we observed Jean she needed and was given help from other students, tutors, and teachers. What seemed to change however, as the year progressed, was her increased confidence and assertiveness. For example, she was seen to take the initiative to help one of the new students during a lab session in April, just as many of the other students had been doing all along. Her level of comprehension was still impaired, but there was a definite change in her attitude toward learning. The lost look was gone, and she began to volunteer answers with more confidence, bringing information she had learned from lab tutoring into the classroom.

A nice example of her increased self-confidence occurred in a reading class, where new students were trying their hands at translating the mini-plays into sign and acting them out. Jean, along with her classmates was able to provide feedback to the new students, based on her own experiences with the task. Later, Jean was seen to look at her notes and suggest to another student where she thought the focus should be. Jean clearly enjoyed her new role as tutor as she gave the student examples of SEE and ASL signs. She encouraged her with the words: "with practice your ASL will improve." She continued in this mode, along with her classmates, increasingly confident of her knowledge, and articulately sharing it with the new students.

This new confidence was accompanied by an air of self-direction that spread to other classes.

In an early May lab session, Jean was working on vocabulary. She was engaged variously with other students, with Ms. Walton, and also was able to obtain answers by herself. When she was unsure of the meaning of the word *mansion*, she looked it up herself in the dictionary, and succeeded in figuring out the correct definition. Even when Ms. Walton returned and defined the word for her in ASL, Jean opted to continue working on her own with the dictionary. This was behavior we had not witnessed before.

David Li

David Li is an Asian man in his early twenties. He grew up in Northern California and attended Deaf programs in public elementary and junior high schools. For high school he attended the State School for the Deaf, from which he graduated. David went to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf after graduating from high school, but returned to California because he "got homesick." He came to Laney "to look for a major ... either in computer drafting or aerospace engineering." He wanted to get his A.A. degree and transfer to a four-year university.

David spent much of his time at Laney in mainstreamed classes, and the only times we observed him in the classroom were during the math lab, where he served as a tutor for his fellow students, at one session of the noon lab where he worked by himself and conferred with Mr. Stein on a paper, and during one session of the Deaf Culture class in late April. David also attended Mr. Stein's English class during the first semester, but did little to attract attention. Most of our insights, therefore, were gained from his interviews.

On the topic of his schooling prior to Laney, David told us:

> "[In elementary and junior high] I liked playing with the hearing kids at recess. We used to play together-- soccer and games. In the classroom, we had a Deaf class for English and reading, and then were in mainstream classes for math and crafts ... High school was very different from junior high and elementary school. In high school there was a lot more active conversation and ASL, signing. In junior high there was a lot more speaking and use of oralism-- body and language and some speech and lipreading."

Of his experience at NTID, David said, "I got homesick. [Rochester was really different from home.] The cultures are really different. The East is really different from the West ...". He also saw differences between NTID and Laney:

> "NTID is a technical school. They focus on technological majors like business, architecture, mechanical processes, computer tech, medical tech; they're more focused on technology. Laney is more broad, they have psychology, computers, drafting, welding; all different kinds of majors."

When asked to compare his teachers at the state school with those at Laney, David said:

> "They're different. Most are Deaf, many are Deaf, at the residential school. Only a few are hearing. Their explanations about things were very limited. Just sort of barely mention a thing, and that's it. Here at Laney the teachers go into much more depth. They really elaborate on things."

David maintained that the best part of the *DeafCAN* program was that: "there's a lot of talk, conversation, that goes on here, both in and outside of class." As far as *DeafCAN* social life was concerned: "We frequent this one place here on campus [a student-run restaurant]. You know why? Because we have Deaf culture here, we like to yak together. Hearing students may go all over, but we Deaf students go to this place."

David found the classes tedious. In the first interview he said this was because:

> "The lectures are a little slow, kind of plodding. Sometimes I'm bored, they're not much of a challenge, kind of boring. [Interviewer: Too low a level for you?] Right. I'll be in a mainstreamed English class next semester so that'll be a challenge for me."

During the first semester David took only reading and writing classes, from Mr. Stein and Dr. Stubbs, respectively. He liked Mr. Stein's style, which he described as:

> "having students read to get the bigger picture, through signs, ASL signs, to understand the meanings, to get an understanding ... In reading class we need to read a lot in order to get a clear picture so that we understand [what we're reading] ... in writing class we practice writing, like sentences and grammar, there's more of a focus on that sort of thing."

We get Mr. Stein's take on David in the following excerpt from his notes, written toward the end of the first semester:

> "A lot of pride in this kid. That Asian concept: afraid to lose face. He's cool and suave. He's a 'smart boy but he's also a 'home' boy. Seems to have a lot of respect among peers-- [really incredible] at math. Somehow he likes me. Started off with a good, casual rapport. But underlying I feel tenseness. I'm afraid to cramp him, ask too much, ask the wrong thing. How far can I take the 'pals' relationship as opposed to the 'student-teacher' relationship? ... I noticed it right off, first class-- he's a different person when it's class time. He's uneasy, embarrassed, like he sat through an hour and a half with a blush on his cheeks and glassy eyes. His English ain't so hot. Guess he knows it and doesn't want to be found out."

He described Dr. Stubbs' way of teaching as follows:

> "It has to be perfect, no mistakes. Everything has to be perfect, perfect sentences, so everything reads right, no mistakes. We have to practice more in verb tenses and understand different things like that. [Interviewer: So you feel you get a lot of critique from him?] Yes, and we learn a lot too, we learn something."

At the end of the first interview David said that when he was finished at Laney his goal was "to transfer to a university-- Cal Poly-- to study aerospace engineering and/or computer drafting ... it's a hard [field of] study. At Cal Poly there are about ten Deaf students ...".

By the time of the second interview David had taken "math, English, Black Studies, photography, and P.E." courses in the mainstream classes at Laney, and the Deaf Culture course in

DeafCAN. His favorite and least favorite teachers and classes were among those in which he was mainstreamed. When asked about socializing with students, he said:

> "We'll meet and chat, or some of us go over to the computer lab and mess around--play games, or use the word processor, do homework, that kind of thing. I'm not really here on campus that much, most of the time I go out off-campus ... [I don't really stay here to socialize much], I'm taking 17.5 units this semester."

When asked how he'd like to see the program change, David replied:

> "Laney needs to change to help improve English. They need to teach grammar, like nouns, verbs, adjectives, vocabulary ... [I wish there were more of that], like in hearing classroom, it should be the same as that. Math is fine, it could stay as is. The computer class is just great ... [In the hearing classes] sometimes I could really use a tutor, during class, like in the English class, because I have trouble, I really struggle with the reading, I have a hard time with it, because it's really the hearing people's language, reading is a real task. So a tutor who could help explain it to me in there would really help me comprehend."

By the end of the year, his plan for the future had changed: "My goal is to be in business to help people become financially independent."

Tung Tran

Tung Tran is a Vietnamese man in his early twenties. After arriving in the United States, he attended junior and senior high school at the state residential school for the Deaf. He began to develop Usher's Syndrome (a progressive disease resulting in blindness) during his junior high school years, and, according to *DeafCAN* staff, appears to have some neurological problems as well. During his years at the state school, he was in a special unit reserved for students who are either multi-handicapped or who have special emotional or social difficulties. Tung's difficulties in expressing himself seemed evident in both of his interviews. He signs haltingly, appears to forget words or lose track in mid-sentence, and tends to repeat the words or phrases of those he converses with. Ms. Sloan feels that he has "major learning disabilities ... he's got relatively good English, but he's very concrete in his thinking and writing."

Tung appeared single-mindedly persistent in his work over the year. Despite all odds, and a relative lack of progress, Tung seemed doggedly determined not to give up. When he talked with us at the beginning of the year, Dr. Stubbs described Tung as a kind of success story. Stubbs said:

> "He arrived in the U.S ... with no formal schooling. He had five years in the U.S. before coming to Laney. His communication skills were so poor that, despite his obvious intelligence, we just let him essentially sit in on classes for a year in hopes that the exposure would help develop his communication skills. At first, when he looked at a book he could translate it verbatim into SEE signs, but had no idea what the text really meant. Now, he's come to the point where he can read text and begin to derive meaning from it. He struggles with it. He's still struggling, but after twelve years with no schooling at all, and then learning [what I consider to be a detrimental language like] SEE, he is functioning better and better all the time. So I

call that a success story."

Mr. Wang taught Tung in his math and computer classes. By the end of the year, Wang was considering him as a success:

> "Boy has he got perseverance! He keeps at it, doggedly, bears through, always asks questions and comes up to me after class, just hangs in there. We were talking at a staff meeting about how last week in class I was really busy with all the students and I forgot that Tung had his hand up for a long time wanting to ask something. I mean there were lines of students needing my attention. Anyway Tung just waited and waited as he sort of got put off while I was dealing with the masses and [Mr. Valdez] said that he saw him starting to cry just a little and explained that he wasn't being ignored, that I was just busy. We just don't have enough staff. But it's obvious that he's not a quitter. Tung just won't give up. Can you imagine? He has Usher's Syndrome too and still just hangs in there. And he's from **Vietnam** on top of that. He was living there during the war, he grew up with no school, no education. He works so hard ... [I am] really impressed by Tung Tran's determination, he really wants so much to be like the others-- on par with them. He's had all these upsets, but he's got incredible perseverance ...".

Throughout the course of the year, Tung could always be seen attempting to do the work, carrying out the assignments, and struggling to understand the concepts being presented. In contrast to his peers, Tung's face was almost always impassive while signing, and he did not seem to be in touch with the proceedings, despite the fact that he made himself a part of the action. This lack of expressiveness became evident during Ms. Walton's reading class when the students were enacting the short plays. Both Ms. Walton and other students would encourage Tung to "use more expressions." After several attempts at delivering the text in a more emotional or expressive way, Tung finally appeared able, for a moment, to add some facial expression to his signing and was applauded by the class for it.

Tung's journal writings for Ms. Walton's writing class all consisted of short simple sentences, largely chronicling the events of his days. An excerpt from a May entry is typical:

> "Last Saturday I cleaned up the carpet with a vacuum cleaner. I worked hard. I shaved my chin with a razor. I went an outside with my father. I saw many somethings. I went to Chinese restaurant with my father. I liked to eat Chinese foods with my father. I bought some things. I went to home. I arrived at home. I rested at home. I read the book."

Although his English writing was technically superior to most of the other students, he never got beyond this uncritical listing of daily events, except occasionally to say that he was "happy", or "excited."

His interview responses, like his behavior in the classroom, reflect a general inability to grasp the point, or express himself clearly:

> I: Okay, now you just told me about your favorite teacher, let's turn it around, what about a teacher who's not so great? Which one would that be?

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> TT: [Ms. Walton]. She's not so great. (I: Why?) Because, she's good and patient, the teacher helps me with ASL, kind of confusing to understand, sort of hazy, but ASL signs are good, but, writing is good, help with writing is good, lots of help, different views, and signing ASL.
>
> I: But you said she's not so great-- why?
>
> TT: Because [rubs head], different, because, it's hard to think, trying to get me to use expression, or ASL, using mood, and emotion and facial expression, ASL, it's not so great, it's really hard, ASL and reading, using facial expression, it's kind of hazy.
>
> I: I understand, but do you mean that [Ms. Walton] herself is not so great?
>
> TT: Yeah, not so great, good, I don't know, it's not the same, the sign practice is not so great ...".

Most of Tung's responses in both interviews were contradictory or incomplete, delivered in a halting or somewhat flustered style. Nevertheless, at a staff meeting in March the staff agreed that Tung's communication style and abilities appeared to be "changing for the better". Furthermore, Ms Walton commented shortly after that she felt Tung was "really opening up more" and that in the previous night's writing class he had written a story with her about his experience in Vietnam. Ms. Walton helped Tung expand and revise this story over the course of the spring semester. The following is an excerpt from one of the early drafts written with Ms. Walton's assistance:

> "I did not see nothing, everything. I never saw cups, table, books and many things before. In Vietnam I saw Vietnamese and American soldiers killing people. I was hungry. I hate war. I wanted my family. I was afraid and cried a lot. My family took me to the boat. A book (sic) looked like a fishing boat. People in boat catched fish and we ate fish and rice. I slep in boat. I had no communication with any people in this boat. I can not read lip or know English. I know nothing. I was so worried. We rode boat to California for many days. I was straved. I was puzzled, confused and lost to see something that was so different in USA. I strached my head with my hand. I felt afraid and nervous about difference people in USA ...".

In his first interview when he was asked what he planned to do after finishing at Laney, he had replied: "I don't know. Having nothing to do. Future, [in the] future, a job, I don't know (I: Haven't decided yet, huh?) I haven't decided yet." In his second interview, when asked the same question, Tung said he wanted "to become a teacher."

Eric Ching

Eric Ching is a Chinese man in his early twenties. He immigrated with his family to Costa Rica and then moved to the United States in 1975 at the age of six. He had no prior schooling before attending school in California. Eric went to special programs for Deaf students at public schools for elementary and junior high, and then transferred to the local school for the Deaf, from which he graduated in 1988. He began attending the *DeafCAN* program straight out of high school. Eric came to the program with a desire to study computers and accounting. He left briefly to attend another community college program for the Deaf, returning to Laney after one semester.

Unfortunately, we did not have the opportunity to observe Eric in many of his classes, and he was not available for the second interview. He was in Mr. Stein's reading class, and tended to work well relative to the other students. He spent a lot of time in and out of class with a few friends, suggesting he was socially well integrated into the program.

When describing his previous school experiences Eric said that his junior high "was such a bore it practically put me to sleep, having to watch SEE signs all the time. ASL is much better." He said of his high school, that he "liked [it] the most, they had the most Deaf people and conversing going on." He described the "best part" of the Laney program as being "the students ... I mean like wanting to see old friends, and they come by, and it's great to have new friends to have good conversation with, you know, better communication that way." At the time of the interview Eric had taken accounting, math, algebra, and *DeafCAN* reading and writing courses. He described Mr. Stein as "good, very good." When asked to elaborate he said:

> "[Stein] will go to great lengths in explaining things and question the students about the meanings of words from the blackboard, going from word to word working at getting the meaning until we really understand. It helps us improve."

Eric cited his algebra lab as his favorite class because: "[I can] take the tests and do the work any time, not like having to be in a class-- it's at my own pace." In order to "improve the *DeafCAN* program" in a way that would make it better for him, Eric suggested:

> "I think it would be better if they could ... add in a video component where we'd be taped signing in ASL as an evaluation for our grade-- to improve our grades. For instance the student would read something then put that into ASL, then when all the students were finished with that, we'd all look at it as an evaluation for a grade, to help us with reading."

After Laney, Eric said that he'd like to "transfer to a university, I'm not sure where yet, I'm looking for a good program."

Hon Chueng

Hon Chueng is a Chinese man in his late twenties. He moved to the United States from Hong Kong when he was fourteen years old and attended mainstream programs for Deaf students at several different public schools in San Jose, California. He graduated from high school in 1981 and attended a local community college program for Deaf students for two years. He quit the program because he felt "they were just teaching the same things over and over." He wanted to take classes in auto mechanics and auto body repair at another local community college, and came to Laney in order to "improve his English."

Throughout our observations of Hon and interviews with him there emanated a mood of dissatisfaction. This dissatisfaction seemed to result from his viewing himself as constantly failing. Furthermore, he appeared to associate his failure or inadequacy with being Deaf. This was clear from his expressions of impatience and irritation with other students, with Deaf teachers in the program, with the quality of teaching in previous programs, and with his own ability to make progress in his courses and in school. Dr. Stubbs commented on Hon's negativity in our interview with him at the beginning of the year:

> "He's still struggling. He arrived here with nothing-- could not write, really had no language ... He was always saying that he did not understand what was going on-- a very frustrated learner, he wanted to learn everything overnight, period. But, through time, he's begun to write, and has developed self-confidence in his writing. At first he just felt like his English was really lousy, but through writing and using the computer a lot ... before he was always just stubbornly firing question after question at the teacher and sort of acting like 'to hell with you all' to his classmates, not really a part of the team. He seems to work better now. He had been very negative about the world around him. He's changed some, become more positive to a certain degree, it's not a total change, but I think he's going to be okay ... I think the quality comes from his interrelations with adult models, it seems that way."

Hon's attitudes about Deaf people in general and Deaf staff in particular are revealed in some of his comments from his own interview. For example, looking back over the year Hon stated how it was easier for him to understand Mr. Stein's explanations of things than it was for him to understand Mr. Valdez:

> "... It's much better than before, like last year, [Mr. Valdez] did not really explain things clearly, it was sort of fuzzy. Now with [Mr. Stein], I get it all, really clearly, you know, he can hear and [Mr. Valdez] is Deaf, so there you are. When you're asking about what something means or if it sounds right, [Valdez] does not know ...".

When asked which teacher he thought "was not so great" he picked Mr. Valdez. In explanation he said:

> "He does not have a Master's, and he does not know stuff-- [Dr. Marsh] is always helping him. Sort of laying things out for him, how to do grammar, or the right way to do things, for his class. Often his sentences/grammar are not correct. Sometimes it's good, I do not mean to discriminate, I understand how it is, you have to just accept it and learn."

These comments seem to indicate Hon's underlying opinion of Deaf people, given that the other students were almost unanimous in their view of Mr. Valdez as a great teacher and communicator. Still more revealing of his attitude toward deafness was Hon's response to a question in the second interview about whether he would hypothetically rather have a Deaf or hearing child. He replied:

> "I do not know, it depends ... if I were lucky and it was born hearing, that'd be great, but if it were born Deaf, I'd just have to accept it. Because, you see, if it were Deaf, it would be hard for it to learn. I'd get tired of having to teach it, you'd have to be so persistent, so it depends on whether it was smart or not ... [if it were hearing] it could pick things up easily through hearing them, like on the radio, or what people are saying. They can be on their own, independent, they would not have to depend on interpreters for what other people are saying all the time, that's a real turn-off. They could really be independent, their own person, they could make their own phone calls, privately. If you're Deaf, aah, it's no good ...".

Ms. Sloan told us that Hon was living at home with his mother, who thought of him as a "failure" due to his deafness. This might explain Hon's own negative self image and his attitude towards deafness. His negativity seems to extend, however, toward other students' behavior in general. Because he is serious about his own desire to learn, he often appears critical or contemptuous of other students whom he perceives as taking a class lightly. For example, on one occasion when Hon was involved in a discussion during a reading class, a fellow student made a silly joke about something irrelevant. Hon became very irritated, and told him to shut up. When describing what he would tell a prospective student about the Laney program, he said:

> "Well, I'd tell them that they need to figure out what they'd like to major in, they need to have a major, not just come and play around here at Laney. This is not the place for that, you have to be serious and study."

Even when describing his early school years, he commented: "... the education ... was not good, there was too much playing around." When asked to describe a class he disliked, Hon responded:

> "Well one thing that's a pain is the students-- when they do not pay attention in class. Sometimes they just talk among themselves and they should be paying attention. They play around and that's a waste of time."

Hon also described his previous school experiences and his attempts to learn English in terms of failure and frustration. In the first interview he said he came to Laney:

> "because I decided I needed to improve my English. It did not work before, improving in English in high school, because of the high schools, it did not work ... [before coming to Laney] I first went to [the other community college with a program for Deaf students], but it did not work. I did not improve. I told them I was not improving, but it still did not work. Then I transferred here."

Hon seemed to like the classes he had taken at Laney and felt, by the time of the second interview that he had made some progress. When asked what he felt he had learned during his time at Laney he replied:

> "Really, I've done a lot of hard work, but I want a good education. It's hard, I want them to teach me, to explain things to me so that I can understand things, I have made gains in my understanding of things. Much better than last year, it's better now. [I: What does 'better now' mean?] I've made some real improvement, it's clear to me what things mean, I really *get it*. Things are more clear, I understand what they mean ...".

Hon followed this comment by again attributing the increase in his comprehension to having hearing teachers who were more skilled than his Deaf teacher had been.

When asked about his "favorite part of the program" during the first interview Hon said:

> "The reading class ... because I need to improve my reading, be able to understand more so it makes sense to me. When I read in class and then I get the teacher's explanations I really get it-- like how verb tense works and how different sentences work."

Initially, when Hon began at Laney, according to Ms. Sloan's notes, he needed to take a physics course as a prerequisite for an aviation mechanics major that he was interested in at another community college. He had intended to take the course but was apparently intimidated by the textbook for it. After telling the service coordinator there that "he could not read" he dropped the course. In the second interview, nearly a year later, he said that his favorite class had been his (mainstream) physics class because:

> "it's all stuff I've never seen [been exposed to] before. Like comparing the weight of things relative to time, at the same time or different times, accounting for speed-- realizing that things of differing weights would fall at the same speed-- wow, I'd never thought of that before, it was **really** interesting ...".

Hon appeared not to be very engaged in the social scene at Laney. When asked if there was "much socializing or chatting among students" during his first interview Hon explained: "I do not carry on conversation too much, only as it pertains to classwork, like what's on a test or just classroom related talk." In the second interview, responding to a similar question, his response was:

> "For me, now, I do not really go in for fun, just with [Eric Ching]. We hang out together and have fun, joke around and stuff. But, I do not know, the other students do not really get along with me. I do not know what to make of it, maybe they're in a bad mood or something, I just leave them alone, and concentrate on my studies."

Students' Language Attitudes

One of the characteristics that has served to distinguish the *DeafCAN* program from other programs serving similar students is its allegiance to the use of ASL as the language of classroom instruction. This is tied to the notion of a bilingual approach which we discuss in more detail in the next section. However, most of the students we studied expressed opinions about ASL and English during the course of the year, and we asked them specifically to talk on this topic during the interviews. Throughout the course of the observed year, the point that ASL and English are quite different was driven home repeatedly, in different ways by different teachers, formally and informally. It was often emphasized that both languages were, indeed, complete languages governed by rules for proper usage. After being in the program for almost three semesters, the students had some interesting observations about the two languages and the domains of proper use for each of them.

All of the students defined ASL by drawing comparisons between it and SEE signs, often providing examples of each as a way of demonstrating the contrast. ASL was usually described in generally positive terms, and SEE somewhat negatively. ASL was seen as "fast," "clear," the "new way," or "new signs," while SEE was called "slow," "tedious," "the old way" and something to be "gotten over" or "thrown out." ASL was defined by many of the students in terms of what it was not, for example that "it's not SEE," or "it's not English." Similarly, it was described in terms of what it did not have, e.g. "it doesn't have signs like IS, ARE, THE,". More than half of the students defined ASL in this manner. Other students defined the language in terms of it's perceived attributes, such as it being "fast," or able to "summarize" or "condense" information. Some described it in terms of their primary associations with the language, "it's what they use at the School for the Deaf." One student defined it from what she had learned in her class about it's derivation, "ASL, I think is from FSC (sic)" [meaning French Sign Language]. Two students out of the eight chose to define it in relation to its status as a language, in addition to their comparisons or other associations. One said, "ASL is a language, it's a language. It's not English, with like precise sentence structure. It's a language, I mean it gives you more of a picture, what something looks like." The other student said, "American Sign Language ... it means, it's for the Deaf to communicate, with language. It makes Deaf people understand, your ASL, it's the language they're used to."

As for where, or for what purpose ASL was to be used, students generally cited institutions specifically for the Deaf ("Gallaudet University," "here at Laney," "at the school for the Deaf"), or for social purposes such as "communication at the Deaf club," "out in the world", "among friends". One student said that ASL should be/is used "among students and teachers," and that one uses "ASL signing to learn English." Despite three semesters in a program whose English curriculum emphasizes the use of ASL to help learn and understand English, only this one student reflected that emphasis in her response to the question.

English was defined by the students as "long, "drawn-out" using "sentence" structures, "what's used for reading and writing," "for speaking properly or writing in correct sentence form," or as related to "SEE" or "writing." It was described by a few students as the majority language of this country: "it's what's used in America" "the spoken language of America like Spanish is in Mexico," the "language of the USA, some European countries use it ...". It was described by students in terms of having rules and standards that govern its use, and, by one student, as being important to teach to Deaf kids because "without it, they will be at a real disadvantage." This same student was the only one to equate English with ASL by saying, "you have to do like SEE style sentences for English, it's the same as with ASL."

It is interesting that English was given status as a "language" and was described as being "rule-governed" in the students' definitions, where ASL was defined largely in terms of comparison, and what it was not, or what it did not have. While ASL was characterized by many students by its absence of the copula or definite article, English was never defined by an absence of anything, least of all the grammatical markers particular to ASL. Few students addressed ASL as a language at all, and those who did moderated their remarks by adding that ASL was "not precise" like English was, was "picture-like" or "makes Deaf people understand." Most described English as "proper" or "exact," and as governed by "rules" for proper usage for writing or speaking. ASL was for "good, clear communication" and was expedient. ASL's domain was in the social life of Deaf people and in the institutions that they frequent. The purpose of English, or where it is to be used, was described as, "for learning in school, for a job, out in the world, to be a teacher," "to transfer into hearing, mainstream classes," "for education, to communicate, for a job, to fill out applications," or that you need it to "become a teacher." One student said it was to be used "for communicating, in letters to friends, for keeping in touch."

In general, although most students seemed to have a clear distinction between ASL and English, many were not so clear on the status of ASL as a language, nor on many of the main features that distinguish one language from the other.

Students' Social Networks

All of the students said they predominantly associated with Deaf people rather than hearing people, and that they preferred to spend more time doing a wider variety of things with their Deaf friends than with hearing friends or family. Those that said they did associate with hearing people described their experiences in terms ranging from extreme discomfort, mistrust, or isolation, to simply being very limited in the amount or quality of communication they could enjoy. When asked what they did with their Deaf friends, replies included:

> "we tell stories and sign together"
>
> "we go out in San Francisco, go to movies, talk about what's happening, what's going on in the news, exchange information"
>
> "just have fun, chat, talk, play sports"
>
> "go out to look at clothes, go shopping, talk about plans, like what we'll do over Christmas or Thanksgiving, just yakking, that kind of thing"
>
> "we'll go out places, just enjoy ourselves, have fun, have good times, like if there's an event, a special thing like going to the mountains, or if there's a play, a Deaf play, things that come up like that, we'll go do"
>
> "go to movies, we go on trips, we play games, we go to church, we play basketball together, oh just a lot of things."

Some students said they never spent time with hearing people socially. Others described their associations in the following ways:

> "My husband's friends are all hearing, but my friends are Deaf. So when I spend time with my husband and I'm with them ... I'll use gesture or home signs ...".
>
> "I don't really hang much with them. Sometimes you'll get the curious onlooker who wants to know what it is you're doing when you're signing."
>
> "With hearing people it's really hard to understand their talk, I'll teach them signs, but, you know, sometimes they just keep forgetting them. It seems they can't get a handle on it."
>
> "From time to time [I'll hang out with a hearing group]. We'll write or sometimes you have an interpreter to understand what's being said. Like if something doesn't work out, or my writing wasn't correct [in class], I might ask them to help me and then the interpreter would interpret what they were saying, they would explain it to me."

Other comments made by students regarding their experiences with hearing people included:

> "Mostly I like a Deaf group, because, it's better, with hearing people sometimes they're deceitful, or fool around, talking behind my back, and I don't know what's going on."
>
> "Before I used to hang out with [another student in the program] a lot in a pretty hearing crowd, and I ended up just sort of sitting around not really able to converse

> much. There I'd be feeling kind of lonely while everyone else was laughing and talking and seeming to have a good time ... I felt really isolated, every day I'd look after my son while they were all laughing and talking and having fun, my friends and parents. Sometimes I'd try to ask them what was funny, or what they were talking about, and get the kind of thing like 'just a second' and they'd ignore me and just continue on. It was hard ...".

One student out of the eight had a fairly neutral comment about hanging out with hearing people, even though he said he has "a mostly Deaf group of friends," who he does "any and everything with" from going on trips to going to church. He added: "when I'm with a hearing group, we'll play basketball, or watch a basketball game, let's see, what else, go to ... business meetings, where I work."

Interestingly enough, given the apparent preference for Deaf people within a social network, only one student said that she would prefer to have a Deaf rather than a hearing child. Her reason was that it would be "easier for me to communicate ... and have that bond with them." Of the remaining seven students, four said that the hearing status of the child wouldn't matter to them, and three said they would prefer a hearing child. Their reasons included:

> "because it could interpret for me and help me"
>
> "because it could talk and communicate"
>
> "because it could be more independent, [and it would be] harder for it to learn if it were deaf."

Students' Writing Samples

The following writing samples are included to provide the reader with an idea of the students' range of proficiency in written English. For those who are unfamiliar with "Deaf English," these excerpts are fairly typical of the average to low end of the spectrum of ability. Most of the examples are taken from the writing activity where students wrote conversationally with hearing or more proficient Deaf writing partners. Other examples are taken from papers or journals.

Jean Ramirez (From a paper written 10/9/89 about her experiences in grade school.)

"I long time old ago. I am kid first time join to elementary school. I look at there teacher self face friendly. The deaf students and me are going to homeroom that class. Teacher say my name is Mr. Sanchez ask what your name?"

Tung Tran (From 2/21/89 session of conversational writing.) [In response to being asked what he had done the previous weekend, and his partner saying she had gone to a play that "wasn't good."]

"Ok I went to visit my friend's home for his car named Volkwagen. I enjoyed all times. How did you feel a play?"

Bobby Brandon (From a 6/2/89 journal entry.)

"I went to movie today 'No Holds Barred' and I watch hulk the WWF wrestling. Hulk very good fight best wrestling. I just got home at night, then watch t.v. news. I still think study about beginning and ending sentences but I don't understand question. It's hard for me word. I hope you will understand me."

Hon Chueng (Undated, response in conversational writing to partner's statement "I seem to be doing all the writing!")

"Yes, but I do not enough my english so I try write to you. I would like to know how many your brother and sister?"

Linda Walker (From 5/16/89 conversational writing in response to partner asking her if she will take any art classes.)

"I might see I can art class but hard time to live with my family. I do art class and make my own work busy. No room for me. Maybe later future will go back Art Class. Hope So. I really like watercolor and Ink, pencils. Different kind of drawing keep these for Art or drawing ...".

Eric Ching (Undated, response in conversational writing to comments about sports and a question asking him if he 'likes going to watch games.')

"Well, not at all, I bought the ticket for regular season But I don't go to the A's Oakland that I like myself to play real games. Next time I will teach how to play the softball. If you make it then will join the team player for enjoy. I hope you can do your best shot in sport."

Rosa Gomez (From 4/18/89 conversational writing in response to her partner saying it was her 30th birthday and she was excited but a little sad.)

"Oh I see about your feel undetstand not only one all people in the world. No one perpect in the world. Understand that is life in the world smile I want you be smile. I want see your face Smile HA! HA! HA!"

Steve Atkins (Undated, response in conversational writing to questions about what he will do with his summer, what kind of job he will get, and his partner's comment that she will be visiting Las Vegas.)

"I am going to looking for job in this summer help me I need money for my life ... Meat cutter in the food tore, or any factory Co. I don't know yet. Well when you go to Les Vegas you try get a lot of lucky pot?"

Lisa Corazon (Undated, first comment in conversational writing to staff member whose wife had worked as an aide/tutor in the program.)

"Hi! How are you doing here? and also your wife. Because I never see her long time. I still remember about her and I not forget for her. Why? I remind before she was taught me as tutor in computer. Sure, I understand her sign clear. When she was not here in Laney College I really wishe! come."

David Li (From a paper written for the Deaf Culture class discussing his reactions to a play called "In Hiding" about Anne Frank.)

"I was interest in watching about the play because there was a very wonderful action. I love to read true stories in history and watched movies on television or at the movies. But I was sad about Into Hiding because it was a true story."

CHAPTER FIVE

Underlying Themes in the *DeafCAN* Program

We began the examination of the *DeafCAN* program with our attention directed towards certain themes, some of which we brought to the study ourselves, while others were derived from our early conversations with the staff and the director. These themes served to guide our organization of the data in preparation for the writing of this ethnography, and would be a starting point for the evaluation phase. As we reviewed and summarized the data, we identified certain additional patterns calling for special examination. In this section we will discuss these themes and the role they play in defining the essential character and methodology of the *DeafCAN* program.

We had three general areas of interest going into the study: first, we wanted to determine the impact of the program on the students' mental health and psychosocial development; secondly we were interested in how the students' individual goals were catered to; and the third area concerned *DeafCAN*'s self-described "bilingual/bicultural" philosophy. One further theme was raised in conversations with members of the staff as we started the inquiry. This centered on the notion of *DeafCAN* as generating a "family-like" and "nurturing" atmosphere.

In addition to these areas of focus, the following four questions were formulated as we conducted our observations and collected the other data: How do the different students relate with different staff members? What issues arise from the contact between Deaf and hearing cultures among the staff and students? and finally a summary question: What are the core defining features of the program? (or, more colloquially: "What is the "*DeafCAN* Way"?). We now discuss each of these themes and questions in turn.

The Impact of *DeafCAN* on the Students' Mental Health and Psychosocial Development

We made no direct assessments of the students' mental health status in this study, but we can look to our observational records and the other data available for information that is indicative of the students' emotional and mental states. Some components of the program were specifically directed towards their emotional and personal well-being, while other elements may have had an indirect influence. The counselor, Jennifer Sloan, saw her job primarily as a "facilitator" rather than a teacher, and she spent much of her counseling time dealing with students' personal issues. The Women's Group was also formed with the explicit purpose of addressing the female students' personal problems. Initially, the focus was on diffusing the disruptive tensions among many of the female students that had fueled a gossip circuit which threatened the progress of the program, but the group soon began dealing with other concerns arising from such issues as sexual harassment, communication problems, difficulties with parents, surviving rape, etc. All four of the women spoke of the women's group in positive terms, varying only in the degree of enthusiasm they expressed. In general, they described it in terms of a) *how it helped them*, and b) *the rules that governed the group*. Jean Ramirez said:

> "They teach us how to resolve problems, how to take care of yourself, how to hold on to stuff and not gossip, not to insult, to respect others' turns for talking, and there's a three minute limit for each person to talk, that's it. I want to go every Thursday, sometimes I'm really busy, like studying for a test, so I have to miss it, but I want to go ... I like the group a lot because it really helps me tone things down,

> diminish tension that builds up, it helps me take care of how I feel, myself, confidently. Like taking care of, if you're feeling timid, or you know how people, if they're kind of soft, sort of weak, it's easy for other people to put the make on them or harass them. But the group really helps them to develop confidence and change, from being sort of soft [malleable] to becoming brave, to not be timid, that you should be more self-respecting and assertive, more strong and assertive."

Rosa Gomez said:

> "It's really cool. It's more like counseling, like if a student has a problem, it's all kept private and it's all women, it's confidential-- that's written in capital letters on the board (smiling) with an asterisk and a number one beside it: REMEMBER CONFIDENTIALITY. [Ms. Sloan, Ms. Walton, and a Deaf aide] get things going, we all sit in a big circle and take turns talking about a problem or whatever. There's a five minute limit, some go on a bit more, and then they'll ask the group for ideas on how to help that person. You're not supposed to just go off on to some tangent, but talk about how they feel. Some people have problems at home, some here, mostly here, with things like feeling hurt by something another student did or said to offend someone. Or maybe feeling hurt by something a teacher did, so it's not only students, it can be both. That kind of talk is kept private within the group, and hopefully the problem gets gradually resolved. But, if week after week the same thing is going on and the problem is not worked out, then the parties involved would eventually make an appointment with [Ms. Sloan] at her office and resolve it that way."

Linda Walker had this to say:

> "The women's group is very much for women to help for our futures, like how to live, how to take care of ourselves. They have like, well in the group, there's no gossip allowed, you keep what's said to yourself. You don't tell anyone what's said. You keep it to yourself, keep it in your head. You have to know better than to spill it all out to other people. Just keep it private, and also how to take care of yourself for the future, like having a baby, or problem-solving, all sorts of things like that are included in the women's group, it's really fantastic. Everyone gets a lot out, expressing themselves, and it's all women, only women, not other [outside] students, just keeping it us women, to keep the trust going."

Lisa Corazon said:

> "It's good, [Ms. Sloan] talks about and gives us advice for how to protect ourselves with men. Like how not to be so scared, to be more brave. I really learned from that, I'd never seen anything like that before-- a women's group. This was the first time for me ... I really like attending it ...".

In their comments, all of the women were able to articulate the rules of the group, and its structure seemed to work well for them. The group appeared to provide an outlet for students to express their concerns, and helped to dispel tensions.

Other program factors that may have had a bearing on the students' personal well-being include a family-like environment, the presence of Deaf teachers and acceptance of Deaf Cultural ways, peer-peer collaborations that developed over the year, and opportunities for the students to take control of the class and to even up the balance of power with the teachers.

For some students the instruction seemed to have a positive effect on their self-image and how they felt about Deaf people in general. The Deaf Culture class, for example, informed the students about many of the achievements of Deaf people. Many students, including Rosa Gomez, found this to be one of the most difficult classes, but she later stated: "I really wanted to know about Deaf history and those things. You always hear so much about hearing people, but this was about the Deaf and it was really very interesting to learn about all that ...". This kind of comment validates the main goal of a class such as that on Deaf Culture, namely that it not only informs students about the achievements of other Deaf people, but at the same time works against the poor self image that results from being a member of an oppressed minority. Other students found inspiration from other classes where a sense of achievement was clearly accompanied by an enhanced sense of self, increased confidence, and a liberation from feeling always dependent on others. Lisa Corazon enjoyed her writing and reading classes most of all, but she was particularly proud of her progress in the computer class:

> "I never knew anything about them [computers] before; in the Philippines they didn't have any. So at first I just said 'I can't do that', you know, getting the computer to work. And Wilbert was very emphatic, 'Oh yes you can' he tells me. ... I sat myself down at the keyboard and I was just dumbfounded. It worked, I could do it. I thought I wasn't able to, but I was! I saw that when I gave it a try, when I took the initiative and just sat down and tried it out, not calling on the teacher, but working at it myself, that I understood how to work it and I really made progress. I thought a Deaf person couldn't do that, but to my surprise, I could!"

Another student, Jean Ramirez, said that she enrolled: "because my husband said that I really needed to learn how to read English." As we observed earlier, Jean seemed overcome by her sense of failure and her lack of knowledge of ASL, and showed some signs of being dominated by her husband. However, as the year went by and she learned to use ASL in preference to SEE signs, she developed other goals beyond simply learning to read. By the end of the year she wanted to learn enough "to get a job to work with computers", and was planning to "teach to my husband the ASL that I learn from here". In spite of this apparent increase in self-esteem and self-confidence, as we noted in our description of Jean, she had a reported relapse the following spring, and left the classroom one day in tears, never to return.

Rosa was a single mother who had started out very scared about coming to school, and, as Ms. Sloan said, "she did not really believe in her ability." She was unsure about the other students and did not feel comfortable socializing with them at first. However things changed as she began to get help from the staff and from the Women's group in particular:

> "... it's really terrific, because you come to school at Laney and there's this wonderful women's group where you can talk about problems, finally! I'm so thrilled about it. You can get like help, with things like preventing family [birth control], and it's confidential, talking about that stuff, that's really fantastic."

Over the year she started to make new friends among the students, too:

> "Before I used to hang out a lot in a pretty hearing crowd, and I ended up just sort of sitting around not really able to converse much. There I'd be feeling kind of lonely while everyone else was laughing and talking and seeming to have a good time. I thought about it and realized I didn't have to stay with that crowd. So then I started hanging out with a Deaf crowd and I started signing and communicating more, planning things, going out, more involved, catching up on the latest, kind of like the Deaf club, the same sort of scene-- all sitting around in a group talking and laughing. It was really terrific. At first I felt like I didn't want to hang around with the Deaf group, I thought that they were all kind of limited, not very smart, and that I'd like hanging around with hearing people. But once I tried that I saw what it was like. ... I felt really isolated, every day I'd look after my son while they were all laughing and talking and having fun, my friends and parents. Sometimes I'd try to ask them what was funny, or what they were talking about, and get the kind of thing like 'just a second' and they'd ignore me and just continue on. It was hard. But with Deaf people, I'm right in there signing with them. I do wish my parents were Deaf."

It would seem from these comments that *DeafCAN* had helped Rosa establish her identity as a Deaf person, feel good about being Deaf, and hence overcome her isolation from Deaf people and make friends.

Often the students' attitudes towards deafness were revealed when they talked about their teachers and about ASL, and in how they answered the interview question "If you were to have a(nother) child would you want him or her to be deaf or hearing?" For the most part, these attitudes were, like Rosa's, more positive about being Deaf, possibly as a result of their experiences in *DeafCAN*. However, there were one or two exceptions. For example, Hon said, on the topic of teachers and language:

> "I've made some real improvement, it's clear to me what things mean, I really get it. It's much better than before, like last year, Roy didn't really explain things clearly, it was sort of fuzzy. Now with Ethan I get it all, really clear, well, you know, he can hear and Roy is Deaf, so there you are."

Not surprisingly, Hon did not fit in well with most of the other students:

> "... I don't know, the other students don't really get along with me. I don't know what to make of it, maybe they're in a bad mood or something, I just leave them alone and concentrate on my studies."

Predictably, Hon would prefer a hearing child:

> "Because if I were lucky and it was born hearing, that'd be great, but if it were born Deaf I'd just have to accept it. ... if it were Deaf it would be hard for it to learn. I'd get tired of having to teach it, you'd have to be so persistent, so it depends on whether it was smart or not ... If you're Deaf, aah, it's no good ...".

Unlike Rosa, Hon does not seem to have come to terms with being Deaf. He appeared to have gained knowledge from the *DeafCAN* program, but not to have acquired a more healthy opinion of himself or other Deaf people.

Tung, on the other hand, the visually-impaired student from Viet Nam, appeared to have mixed feelings, to be confused about how he felt, if not neurologically impaired, and perhaps also suffered from the traumatic experiences he had had during the Viet Nam war. He was positive about the program in general: "It's like, it's good, there are many good, nice Deaf people. The teachers and students, everyone is friends and there's lots of socializing, and communication, and signing in ASL." However, his favorite subject was English "because it's good", but his least favorite was writing "because it's hard". At first he responded that he would like his child to be Deaf because "father could teach ASL". Later, however, he had second thoughts:

> "Wait, wait a minute. Before we go on, I wish maybe to have a hearing son, I don't know. ... Forget the Deaf, I'd like a hearing child, because they could communicate and talk, interpret."

After the year of our observation it became clear to the staff that this student was not in a position to benefit from the program either academically or psychologically, and so he was referred to a sheltered workshop nearby. Incidently, this was the suggestion made by his high school counselor before he began at Laney.

Steve had grown up being teased and excluded by hearing kids in his early days at school, and his anger was evident from his comments and behavior during the year we observed him. While his two favorite teachers included one Deaf and one hearing, Steve developed a strong dislike (which was mutual) of his hearing reading teacher, Ethan Stein:

> "He says that he's a strict [serious] teacher, but really he's not. He always likes to play around with Rosa, always playing around and provoking and yakking ... I really get mad at him. I'm tired of him, it's the same old thing over and over ... Most of the students never pay attention to him. It's like, 'here he goes again!' It's a drag."

Steve did not develop close relationships with the other Deaf students either. Commenting on his social habits, he said: "I don't really go out for fun much with the students. Usually I just split and go home to catch some sleep ... I'm not involved." On the topic of friends in general, Steve's mistrust of hearing people was more overtly expressed:

> "Mostly I like a Deaf group because it's better. With hearing people sometimes they're deceitful, or fool around, talking behind my back, and I don't know what's going on ... I really don't socialize with hearing groups very much, just a little bit. I don't feel very positive around hearing people, mostly very negative."

If Steve were to have a hearing child, however, it would not make any difference: "I like both [Deaf and hearing children]. If it lost its hearing I'd give it support, and if it was hearing that wouldn't matter, I'd keep it."

In spite of Steve's antisocial behavior, negative attitudes, and what some of the staff described as "identity problems", he was one of the students singled out by many of the teachers as a success:

> "He had a real attitude problem which is still evident. You can still see it, but we

> were able to work with him and show him that-- he came in with the 'I can't do it attitude' and we told him that he could and that he needed to change his attitude ... and that we believed in him and he needed to believe in himself ... I could see when the light finally went on. And he's hooked into the program. It's really important to him ... he's great." [Jennifer Sloan]

> "He had real identity problems. He was ambivalent about his identity as a signer (versus an oral Deaf person). He had personal problems, problems with marijuana and alcohol, a whole list of things. But through a lot of support and encouragement, he's now one of our best students." [David Stubbs]

> "He really had tremendous numbers of defenses and he came in challenging every teacher on every count for the whole first six months. And then this year, on the first day he started the challenge routine again and I said: 'hey Steve ... trust yourself, you know what you need to do'. And the fact that he could hear me and do it shows the kind of transformation that I think is taking place in him." [Carla Marsh]

Over the year Steve lost a lot of his angry, confrontational, and sulky behavior to become identified by many of the staff as a successful student. Stubbs attributed these changes, that were clearly personal rather than academic, to positive relationships with Deaf adults as well as the kind of support that the *DeafCAN* family was able to give him.

If one had to identify a single factor that might have contributed most to the personal growth of the students, the notion of the *DeafCAN* program as family may be the prime candidate, embracing as it does other aspects such as collaboration and mutual support, Deaf cultural ways, and student empowerment. Many students referred to the family concept in one way or another, as did all the staff. Perhaps the most poignant illustration of how students identified *DeafCAN* as a home base comes from a student who had been raped. As soon as her assailant left, she got on the subway and went to the *DeafCAN* office to talk to one of the female staff members about her ordeal. Not the police, not the hospital, not home, not to a friend, but to her surrogate family at *DeafCAN*. The staff actively promoted the idea that they were not teachers in the traditional sense, not "the boss", but more like supportive older siblings. The other students also helped each other like brothers and sisters, and over the year the group organized social events together and made "family outings" to places of interest. If successful, it is likely that this kind of environment would promote feelings of well-being, an enhanced sense of belonging, increased confidence, and a respect for Deaf people. While not part of the official curriculum, surely these correlates of mental health are an important feature of the program.

The family atmosphere was often achieved in the classroom, too. The following statement is indicative of this, and was made by a student in the context of a discussion about her favorite class:

> "My favorite class? Oh writing, I really enjoy all the input from everyone. We all get involved in really tearing the stuff apart, 'no it's this way ... no, no that's wrong ...' and you're writing stuff down. I really enjoy that-- with everyone throwing their ideas in. It feels like playing around with your family-- those kinds of interactions where everyone has something to say and you're going from one to another and all. It's like a family and I really like that."

Student Goals

The students profiled in the study were asked in both interviews about their purposes in coming to the *DeafCAN* program. This section provides a brief synopsis of students' original goals and how they've been addressed or changed over the course of the two years they've spent at Laney College.

David Li came to *DeafCAN* to work on getting an A.A. degree in drafting or aerospace engineering in order to transfer to a four-year university. By his second interview he had decided to "go into business to help people become financially independent." His goals in coming to the program were to improve his English and to learn things from general education courses that would "help him in his future and in order to transfer to a university." David has moved completely into the hearing mainstream and Project Bridge classes at Laney College.

Hon Chueng wanted to improve his English through the *DeafCAN* program, and get an A.A. degree in electronics technology in order to find a job in that field. This fall, Hon will graduate into Project Bridge English classes and will take a mainstream electronics assembly class.

Eric Ching entered the program "looking for a major" and to take accounting courses. He wanted to be able to transfer to a four-year university. After bouncing back and forth between *DeafCAN* and another local community college for some time, he finally left the program completely, but is now planning to return this fall.

Tung Tran said he came to the program for "different reasons." Although he was unable to articulate a goal of his studies during the first interview, a year later he said he "wanted to become a teacher." Tung was not allowed to continue in the program because he had not made any discernible progress and has since registered for an English class at a local city college.

Rosa Gomez came to Laney on the advice of her friend, recognizing that "she had more to learn after high school." She wanted to prepare herself for her "future, to get a good job" and to be able to share her knowledge with her young son. She told us in her second interview that she wanted to continue on in school in order to be a teacher, but she was torn between needing a break from the rigors of school and continuing on for what seemed an "interminable" amount of time in order to go through the program and complete the necessary requirements. Rosa plans to return to *DeafCAN* classes this coming fall.

Bobby Brandon wanted to ameliorate his sense of isolation and the "mental stagnation" he felt it produced by joining the program. He also wanted to get either an A.A. degree or his high school equivalency diploma. He left the program after alienating almost all of the staff and students during the time he spent there.

Jean Ramirez sought to restore her language capabilities in both sign and English by enrolling in *DeafCAN*. She had felt "isolated" in her role as a housewife and wanted to use the program to help her understand and develop competency in both ASL and English. She also wanted to work on her signing fluency and to prepare for a job in computers. Ms. Ramirez appeared to be improving her communication abilities and making progress in her classes when she abruptly withdrew from school.

Linda Walker came to Laney because she was impressed with the program for Deaf students. She felt she wanted to "learn more about how to improve [her] writing," and wanted to take advantage of the interpreting services and *DeafCAN* program. She wanted to find a job that would enable her to be independent from her parents and "make it" in the world on her own. She left the program in order to work because she felt overwhelmed by the need to move out of her parents' home.

Steve Atkins came to the program hoping it would help him move out of the kinds of "blue collar jobs" he'd become used to and move up into "white collar work." He entered the program thinking about going into drafting, but later decided there were greater job opportunities in the computer field. He said he wanted to "get a job, get married, get some money, and have a house and a farm." He left the program to attend to his personal life but plans to return this coming fall.

Lisa Corazon wanted to learn more about "reading, vocabulary and English." She had a desire to "finish all the coursework and graduate from Laney" rather than stretch out her studies by transferring from one college to another. She left the program after two years to move with her family and attend another college closer to where they lived.

Some of these students appear to be making progress toward the goals they had upon entering the program two years ago. Other students changed their goals or are making progress in other areas that may ultimately allow for their ambitions to be realized. Still others clearly have lost sight of their purposes in coming to Laney. Sometimes the realities of students' lives outside of school became overwhelming and affected how they were or were not able to pursue their ambitions. Such was the case with both Steve Atkins and Linda Walker. So many factors are involved in students' being able to fulfill their aspirations, that it is difficult to determine which aspects are program related. Nevertheless, speculations can be made from our observations. For example, it is possible that Rosa Gomez became dependent on Ms. Walton's overindulgence in the classroom and is not able to be as self-reliant a student as is required for her to progress through the program and mainstream classes before she burns out on the "interminable" amount of time it will take her. Lisa Corazon provides a different example. She had come to the program from the Philippines identifying with the derogatory view of Deaf people she felt was held by that society in general and the school system in particular, but later spoke with delight of her discovery that she could learn to operate a computer program or turn in a piece of writing that her teacher thought was "captivating" or "beautiful." Despite the fact that her goal had been to finish all of her coursework and graduate from Laney, it was perhaps due to the newfound confidence in her own abilities that she was able to continue on in her studies at another college with considerably less support.

One young man, a foreign student who was not one of those we focused on in the study, was cited by staff members as one of the "success stories" we asked about in our interviews. He had come to the program with very limited confidence and communication skills. He was described as being very shy, but after spending a few years in the program, "hooked into the network," made friends with the other Deaf students, and progressed rapidly through the paces of the *DeafCAN* program, and into *Project Bridge* and mainstream classes. He decided that what he really wanted to do was attend Gallaudet University. He presumed that the English courses he had taken in *DeafCAN* and at Laney would prepare him for admission to Gallaudet's regular program. After taking their entrance exam he was very disappointed to find out that he had been placed in the University's prep program. This meant that he would spend his first semesters at Gallaudet taking the "catch-up" kinds of coursework he thought he had gotten out of the way at Laney. Because of this student's experience, both he and staff members questioned the usefulness of *DeafCAN's* coursework in preparing students for entry into other schools and universities.

In summary of these observations, it would seem that the goals of the students in the *DeafCAN* program were indeed varied. Some were intent on improving academic skills, others focused on acquiring vocational or job training abilities, while still others were looking for personal growth and independence. In some cases, students spoke of goals having been achieved that were not part of their original reasons for entering the program. They either changed direction, or progressed in ways that were not among their conscious motivations. For one or two students, their premature quitting of the program actually represented the attainment of a goal, namely to be independent and get a job.

DeafCAN as a Bilingual/Bicultural Program

The program's self-proclaimed "bilingual/bicultural" nature was one of the things that set *DeafCAN* apart from other programs, and was a feature we were eager to learn more about. As we have seen in this report, once staff members began to analyze their own interpretations of this aspect of the program philosophy, they came to realize that their formulation of the concept was vague, and varied from teacher to teacher. In the end, several of the staff questioned the appropriateness of a bilingual label for the program. As Dr. Marsh said in the mid-year discussion meeting: "We are a nice, sweet program. The teachers are sweet, the students are sweet, we love them, they love us-- but that's not necessarily bilingual, so let's not pretend." During that same meeting, as all of the staff members strove toward their own definitions of the program's bilingual component, Mr. Stein challenged them: "... although everyone on staff speaks of the program as being bilingual, and even though all the staff use ASL for classroom communication, it is English that gets studied, not ASL ... where is the study of ASL?"

In her last interview, Marsh's concept of the "bilingual approach" had shifted. She said:

> "... hearing that maybe we weren't anything, that maybe we weren't really a bilingual program, that what we were was a sweet program, that struck a deep chord in me and was one of the things that I think pushed me towards this notion of 'what does it mean to be a bilingual program?' and 'what's the difference between an approach or a method, and a curriculum?' ... I really see that you have to have both a curriculum and you have to have the proper curriculum environment which is, for our students, is a bilingual one and it happens to be sign language ... now that I understand this principle, it can be adapted to any group-- that you have to open the classroom to their own language, but then you have to really make the movements toward the target with content and not with skill drill."

From our classroom observations it looked as if the most consistent indicator of the program's "bilingual" nature was the use of ASL as the language of classroom instruction. Indeed, it was used by staff members and students to conduct all classroom activities. In terms of a bilingual protocol at a metalinguistic level (e.g. overt instruction or analysis of either or both languages), most of the focus that we observed was on the translation of English vocabulary words into equivalent ASL glosses and signs. There was some variation on this theme. For example, in Dr. Stubbs' writing class, students practiced defining English idioms in ASL signs over the course of several class meetings. More formal study and practice with English grammatical constructions occurred in the evening writing classes during both semesters. Formal study of grammatical constructions in ASL was not built into the curriculum or classes in a systematic way (as noted by Mr. Stein). However, it did occur sporadically. For example, in sessions of Dr. Stubbs' Deaf Culture course, students were shown videotapes of various ASL and signed English samples and then encouraged to discuss differences between them and the purposes for each kind of signing. Also, when assigned in his class to create ASL versions of haiku poetry, students were formally introduced to some of the grammatical structures in ASL (e.g. classifiers) and given practice at a metalinguistic level in using them to construct their poems. In sessions of Mr. Stein's class during the latter part of the spring semester, he too introduced the study of some ASL grammatical constructions. In the late spring when the ASL component of the reading curriculum was presented during combined sections of the reading classes, students were taught a formal notation system for glossing ASL signs. They were given instruction and practice in "reading" it, thus helping them develop a kind of *ASL literacy*, allowing them, theoretically, to *write* their signed stories, *read* signed stories of others, and *translate* stories back and forth between English and ASL.

Teachers differed in the ways they understood and interpreted the bilingual ideology according to their backgrounds as described in section 5.5. Although general interpretation of the concept varied among all staff members, Mr. Valdez and Ms. Walton both tended to focus in the classroom on translation of English vocabulary items into ASL (signs or glosses). This was practiced by Mr. Stein as well, yet he also discussed the process and components of the translations at a metalinguistic level with his students. Dr. Stubbs, however, focused primarily on teaching students about the languages and their uses at a metalinguistic level, within the context of his writing and Deaf Culture courses.

The most conspicuous influence on students of the "bilingual" instruction seemed to be a heightened awareness of the existence and uniqueness of the two languages. Although comparison data are unavailable regarding students' language attitudes and awareness at the beginning of the year, all of the students reported that they recognized (to varying degrees) that ASL was something very distinct from English by the time their second interviews were conducted.

Also, the students seemed to have adopted some of the values that staff had consciously and unconsciously attached to the two languages. As demonstrated by interview and in-class comments, students perceived ASL as "good ... for fast, clear communication ... better than SEE signs," and English as "tedious," and full of "long, drawn-out" structures. As detailed in the **Language Attitudes** section, students generally described ASL in very positive terms, and English was often identified with SEE-style signing and thus inherited the negative associations that those signs maintain in the *DeafCAN* perspective. Ms. Walton and Mr. Valdez, in particular, consistently conveyed their respect and love for ASL, and their distaste for SEE signs through their in-class commentary and critiques. Despite the program's intended bilingual approach, with the exception of the students' general sense that ASL is a "good" thing, and SEE signs are to be done away with, their larger language attitudes appeared relatively uninfluenced by the premises behind the "approach." By the year-end interviews they perceived ASL as a form of expedient communication with little structure or grammar that was not necessarily appropriate for academic purposes. English continued to be viewed as a somewhat enigmatic rule-governed system that they had little access to, but now they were perhaps more willing to take risks in trying to learn it.

The *DeafCAN* program was initially described to us as being both bilingual and bicultural. It is more difficult to describe the bicultural aspects of the program, as they appeared to be less self-conscious, and hence, less visible. A *Deaf* culture class was incorporated in the curriculum, but there was nothing in any of the classes about hearing culture, or how the two cultures interact and/or clash. This was viewed by Mr. Stein as a serious shortcoming, and the kind of information that the students badly needed in order to learn how to "cross over" between the worlds of the Deaf and the hearing. During his second interview, Stein described a perceived need by other Deaf program coordinators to teach their students more "high-tech" signs in order to deal with and be successful in the hearing world. Stein said:

> "Our students don't necessarily need to learn technical signs ... they need to know how to talk [code-switch] when you go over to the other side. It's that kind of a thing ... maybe it's not really a sign language class [that we need], maybe it's a Deaf culture class and hearing culture class. I think that kind of stuff is really needed for our students."

From our observations, when hearing culture was brought up at all in classes, it was always from the vantage point of it being an enigma, largely in connection with the English language. Particularly after going through a difficult or trying translation, Ms. Walton and Mr. Valdez frequently commented that "English is hearing people's language ... it may seem strange to us, but that's hearing English, it's the way they use it ...".

All staff members described the running of the program as a team effort, and spoke often of the camaraderie, support and family atmosphere that they had created in working together. By it's very nature, the staff is bicultural, being composed of four Deaf and three hearing members. But, with the exception of Mr. Stein, none of the staff talked about how they got along as a bicultural group. Those kinds of issues were not raised or discussed in an overt manner during the course of the year of observation. Mr. Stein expressed his disappointment in what he saw as the staff's refusal to deal with issues raised from two cultures working together.

> "... I feel like the Deaf people and the hearing people are often at odds ... we talk about the students and we work on things, but we're really coming from two different directions. That can be okay, I mean that can be a strong point for having Deaf and hearing people work together-- coming from two different angles. But coming from two different places without understanding isn't good, it leads to misunderstandings, it leads to adversity, I think. We're not at war, there's little clashes sometimes, and personality squabbles, little things, you know real minor things, but I just find it real disappointing that staff people, as adults and as professionals never really get down to dealing with these things ... we need to be more unified I think, and that's one way it could happen. That's the thing about 'bicultural.' What do we know about bicultural? We don't face those issues ourselves really ... I think if we were dealing with it ourselves as an issue, as a topic of study or inquiry, I think that would filter down to the students, and they would see, I think most of our students don't see it as a problem yet, they don't even perceive it, this whole idea of 'biculturalism' or what it means to be able to crossover. If we were dealing with it in some other way, in some way that was incorporated into the whole program, then that would trickle down, through discussions or something, or we would want to bring it in, in some way, because that's really one thing that they need."

DeafCAN as a Family

Initially, and throughout the course of our interviews and observation, the *DeafCAN* environment was described by staff members as having a family-like quality. We investigated this notion further to try to identify how it was manifested over the year. The clearest demonstration was in the warmth and familiarity exchanged among students and teachers. Compliments, shows of support, exchanges of personal information, and mutual concern for each others' personal problems were woven through the relationships of people in the program. We were able to observe innumerable examples of these displays of warmth and familiarity. Students and staff were often physically affectionate with one another. During one of Ms. Walton's reading classes when Dr. Marsh was present, Rick, a student from the more advanced class came over to the group, gave Dr. Marsh a kiss hello, smiled warmly at Rosa Gomez, and then quietly watched the activity that his fellow students were engaged in. Hugs or kisses hello, goodbye, or as a gesture of support were common sights in the Deaf Services Office, too.

At the women's peer group, each arrival was warmly greeted, often by a hug from one of the other students, and sometimes the group applauded when a student arrived whom they had thought was not going to make it. Many of the women sat physically very close to one another, or would put an arm around the shoulders of a peer, or show other forms of physical affection. Many times in her classes Ms. Walton would compliment her students, or acknowledge changes they had made, both in things related to school, and students' lives in general. For example she complimented a student on a new hairstyle during the reading class. Often, in Ms. Walton's class particularly, when a student completed an activity that they had all been working on, Walton and the other class members applauded them. During one of her class sessions, when one of the newer and more awkward students finished signing a piece of text, another student acknowledged her effort by patting her on the back.

As Mr. Wang said in his interview, the students and teachers in *DeafCAN* know a lot about each others' private lives, and this served to make the group more intimate and more family-like than would be expected in a community college setting. From this personal knowledge more compassion and understanding is frequently generated for the extenuating circumstances that interfere from time to time with students' ability to perform well in school. For example, the fact that Rosa Gomez was a young mother of a small child was taken into account by her teachers when she had to miss class to stay home with him, or when she was allowed to make-up assignments that were neglected because her day care arrangements fell through. Similarly, students were understanding of the events in their teachers' lives, such as when one staff member was going through a divorce, or when others were experiencing the stress of exams in their graduate school training. This deeper intimacy was partly the result of *DeafCAN* being a small program, but was perhaps also due to the fact that the participants shared a minority culture and/or language.

Ms. Sloan seemed to articulate the sentiments of other staff when she commented about this aspect of the program during the meeting where Dr. Marsh labeled *DeafCAN* a "sweet program." As Sloan put it:

> "Maybe we're the only program in the world that does this, and there's a lot of power behind that. We support the students in that family feeling and that is important, powerful stuff. It's the most important part of the program, but it's also not enough ... they need something more than 'sweet support,' in order to become skilled readers or comfortably mainstream ...".

Relationships between Students and Staff

From our sampling of classroom activities, it appeared that certain students flourished with one teacher, or in a particular class, but made little or no progress in other classrooms. While this is not especially unusual in a school setting, some further insights may be gained by examining the underlying relationships between the students and their teachers more closely.

As we have seen, it was part of Ms. Walton's style to take care of her students in a way that seemed to border on overindulgence. One immediate effect of this extensive support was that her students attained a certain confidence which made them willing to attempt the kinds of school tasks at which most of them had repeatedly failed in the past. On the other hand, it also fostered a kind of dependence such that the students tended to rely on extensive assistance in order to understand and achieve in school. Ms. Walton herself questioned whether she was "rescuing" students in a way that was not in their best interests. For example, Rosa Gomez made tremendous advances in Walton's reading and writing classes, gaining confidence and applying it to her schoolwork in general, yet she was unable to survive in Dr. Stubbs Deaf Culture class, where such a comprehensive support system was lacking. It is also possible that Jean Ramirez was no longer able to tolerate the challenge that school presented to her, after moving from Ms. Walton's care-taking environment to a very different kind of *DeafCAN* classroom. On the other hand, one might also speculate that Jean would not have been able to stay in college at all, or make the advances she did, without the kind of care and support that Ms. Walton provided.

The amount of assistance given the students was an issue which clearly separated the teaching styles of the *DeafCAN* staff. As Dr. Stubbs expressed in his interviews and during meetings, it was his opinion that the staff did a disservice to students, both in accepting those that were not really ready for college, and then, once they were there, "rescuing" them from college level tasks by doing too much for them. Indeed, this is a conclusion that Dr. Marsh eventually came to herself. During the year following our observations, Dr. Marsh and her colleagues began to limit the number of students they accepted to those they felt had the potential to "make it" in the program. Marsh said that "it took us five years to learn that we needed to do this," and that this decision really seemed to improve the classes.

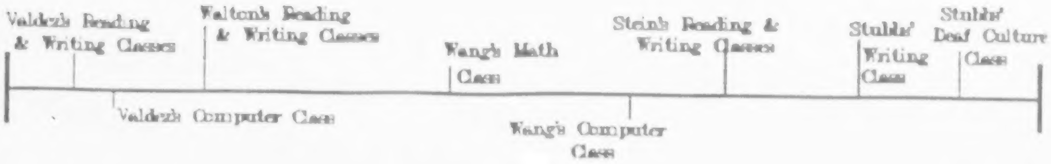
Mr. Stein's approach was similar to that of Dr. Stubbs. He felt that preparation for mainstream college classes involved the assumption of basic responsibilities for studying and keeping up with the pace of the class. Many of Ms. Walton's students were unable to deal with Stubbs' class, much less thrive there, and some students reacted against Mr. Stein, too. We recall the confrontation Stein had with his students over their grades on a mid-term exam, which raised discussion about their differing expectations regarding the amount of responsibility for learning that the students should carry. Several of the students complained to Stein at that point that he had "rushed through the material," "signed too fast," or, at the furthest extreme "didn't respect Deaf people." On the other hand, it was those very students, two of them from that particular class session, who have successfully transitioned into Project Bridge classes at Laney. Additionally, David Li, who had had experience at a four year college (NTID), and was more successfully mainstreamed at Laney than most of the other students, appreciated Mr. Stein's style. Apparently there was a better match between Stein and this more experienced student who had found other *DeafCAN* classes somewhat tedious and "not much of a challenge."

Teachers varied not only in the amount of support they provided their students, but also in the kind of assistance they gave. For example, Mr. Valdez made a habit of interpreting difficult texts into ASL. He would either interpret directly from the book, or explain or re-tell stories from books into ASL. Mr. Stein, however, focused on the *process* that students should use for understanding text themselves, rather than translating it for them. He attempted to train them either to gloss English words, comprehend English text by using context clues, or ask and answer questions about the meaning of what they were reading. This distinction was the subject of a discussion between Dr. Marsh and Mr. Valdez on what the students' needed to help them read. Valdez felt that his interpretations into ASL, accompanied by much "encouragement, help" and " and a "positive attitude" concerning the students' ability to read were most important. Marsh felt that students needed, most critically, to be taught "how" to read. Some of the students expressed their own feelings on the matter. Linda Walker and Lisa Corazon, for example, said how much they liked Mr. Valdez's style in class, and how he enabled them to understand things because of his "clear explanations," and detailed interpretations of text. They, among others, also said that although they liked or respected Mr. Stein, his style of teaching left them cold. They felt that either he "signed too fast," or, as Lisa put it:

> "... he'll ask me what I think [the text] means, and I'm at a loss ... it's sort of like put upon me to figure out what it means, I don't really get any help, it's a kind of *you're on your own* thing ...".

The structure of the class also influenced the relationship between teacher and students and the kind of verbal (i.e. signed) interaction that ensued. Some classes were more formally structured with typical kinds of school tasks built-in to the format, such as student presentations, essay writing, a number of quizzes, written homework, and lectures from the teacher. In other classes many fewer traditional school-based tasks were required and classroom conversation was more chatty, less academic in nature. Further, the amount of content material varied in the classes. In some classes, such as Dr. Stubbs' Deaf Culture, or Mr. Wang's computer courses, a lot of information about the subject was provided (e.g. Deaf theater, specifics of Deaf history, types of computers, parts and process of computer operation, etc.). In other courses, very little informational content was conveyed and the focus was either on narrative exchanges from personal experience (either the students' or the teachers'), which may or may not have been necessarily related to what was supposedly being taught, or practice at skill-building in the components of the reading or writing task, as staff members defined it in their classrooms. We propose below a continuum along which the *DeafCAN* classes might be placed. The left end represents those classes presenting little content information, and/or lower teacher expectations for completion of school-based tasks, and/or a less traditionally structured classroom. A placement closer to the right side of the continuum represents a progression toward those classes which present more content information, and/or higher teacher expectations for completion of school-based tasks, and/or a more traditionally structured classroom, as these descriptors have been defined above. Figure 1 displays the proposed continuum.

FIGURE 1
Continuum of *DeafCAN* Classes


Valdez's Reading & Writing Classes
Walton's Reading & Writing Classes
Wang's Math Class
Stein's Reading & Writing Classes
Stubbs' Writing Class
Stubbs' Deaf Culture Class
Valdez's Computer Class
Wang's Computer Class

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It is possible that these differences are simply the result of Deaf/hearing cultural phenomena. Alternatively, it may be that teachers varied in their expectations for appropriate classroom conduct as a function of their own level of formal education and/or training in education. These factors are also accounted for in the placement of classes in Figure 1. On one end is Mr. Valdez, who comes from a Deaf family and is strongly rooted in Deaf cultural traditions. Next to him is Ms. Walton, who, although well-versed in Deaf culture, was not raised as a member of the Deaf community because she had hearing parents. The same would seem to be true for Mr. Wang, and Mr. Stein, of course, is hearing. Dr. Stubbs is on the furthest end of the continuum from Mr. Valdez. Despite the fact that Stubbs is extremely knowledgeable about Deaf culture and it's traditions, both from an academic and experiential standpoint, he was not raised with them, growing up in a hearing family and becoming Deaf after childhood. On the level of formal education and/or training as a teacher: Mr. Valdez has had no formal training as a teacher and holds an A. A. degree; Ms. Walton is now completing her requirements for an M.A. in Deaf Education, and obviously has had a fair amount of formal teacher training, as well as the *hands-on* training that all *DeafCAN* staff have experienced; Mr. Wang completed his undergraduate work in Mathematics and Computer Sciences, and holds a Master's degree in Special Education; Mr. Stein has worked as either an aide or a teacher in Deaf and special education classrooms since the age of fifteen, and holds a Master's degree in Education; Dr. Stubbs holds a doctorate and has taught both Deaf and hearing students for many years. We would like to point out that we are not implying that positions on the continuum are in any way reflective of the quality of teaching. It is simply a means of displaying differences between instructors' teaching styles.

Deaf and Hearing Cultures in Contact

Although the majority of staff and all the students in the *DeafCAN* program were Deaf, the presence of three hearing teachers provided us with the opportunity to observe Deaf and hearing people interacting with one another over a long period of time. The influence of cultural background has been noted in discussions of teaching style, student behavior, and classroom dynamics in general. In section 5.3 we described the lack of acknowledgement, both in the curriculum and among staff members, of the conflicts raised by differing cultural expectations when Deaf and hearing people interact. It was not until our series of Monday night sessions viewing videotapes of *DeafCAN* classes, that the participating teachers specifically addressed these issues.

During the first of these meetings, Mr. Stein talked about the problems that he had had in his English class with a student named Rob. Stein described Rob as being rigid in his expectations about the proper way to learn English. Rob often angrily insisted that it had to be done through drill work in vocabulary and grammar practice and not, as Mr. Stein would have it, through linguistic and semantic analysis. Both Mr. Valdez and Mr. Wang said that they had not had any problems with this student themselves, and Valdez suggested that Mr. Stein's struggle with him might be related to Stein being hearing. Mr. Wang said that maybe Rob "wanted to feel equal to you [as a hearing person]," or that Rob might have felt "engaged in a challenge" with Mr. Stein. Valdez added that: "with a Deaf teacher the issues wouldn't be the same," and he wondered "exactly where Rob's anger was coming from."

Mr. Stein responded by saying that he thought Rob resented him, as a hearing person, using ASL. He went on to say that Rob complained that: "I didn't provide a good model of English, and [he] wanted me to sign English like Dr. Stubbs does." Mr. Valdez apparently found this incredulous, and said, with an expression of distaste, "that's impossible!" Stein continued, saying that Rob felt "with Stubbs he could 'read his lips and learn English that way,' but that when I sign ASL he 'isn't able to learn what the English is' that I'm talking about." Stein felt that Rob had a lot of confusion and problems with issues related to his view of learning and school. Later, while watching a tape of one of Ms. Walton's early classes discussing the differences between ASL and English, Mr. Stein commented that:

> "it's great to see where the awareness [of the two language] began ... it started in your [Walton's] class ... maybe if Rob had started there, with you, by the time he got to my class, he would have had less of a problem with the concept."

He goes on to say:

> "I hate when I'm in that position, where I'm telling them about ASL. It's wrong, it's the wrong way. Like you [Valdez] said, with Rob, maybe the problem between us is that I'm hearing. You're right. It's a problem when a hearing person is telling a Deaf person about ASL. But I'm stuck in that position ...".

Mr. Valdez seemed to feel that he personally had benefitted from Stein's dual status as a hearing person who was fluent in ASL and well-versed in its grammar. Valdez explained this as follows:

> "I grew up as a fluent signer, but in terms of studying ASL as a language and in a metalinguistic way, it wasn't until I came to Laney and worked with you [Stein] that I began to recognize it in that way. To me, ASL had it's place, and, English was the language I thought in when it came to reading. I feel that you taught me to re-think that attitude and change so that I could then help the students try and deal with those things or make those kinds of changes in themselves. So you being hearing really isn't that big of a deal."

Mr. Stein disagreed:

> "The situation is different with the students than with a colleague, like you. The students have pre-existing ideas about what school means, and a hearing teacher telling them that ASL is a wonderful thing isn't part of that scheme."

At one point Mr. Stein was asked why he felt it was wrong for him, a hearing person, to teach ASL. He reiterated: "... for a new student to be learning about ASL for the first time from a hearing person-- I think that's wrong." The researcher and other staff members pressed him on this point and he elaborated:

> "... it's not necessarily qualifications, it's attitude or something. The students have grown up being brainwashed into thinking they have a problem with English. I think we're trying to teach them that, first, they have one language that's no problem for them, and that's ASL. But first we have to convince them, because they think of ASL as low language, all that stuff, so we need to convince them first, to sell them on the idea that ASL is their language, it's a good language, and that ASL and English are on par with one another. I think a hearing person saying that is risky business. I really feel strongly that it's not qualifications [per se], in some ways I know more

> about ASL because I've studied it than Roy and Betty, because they haven't really studied it in depth like I have. They still produce ASL better than me, but I know the structure and grammar maybe a little bit better. But I think that teaching a kind of identity with the language, with a culture and stuff can't be done by a hearing person. It doesn't work, I think that's what happened with Rob, I think that's what created the struggle between us ...".

While the forgoing discussion was ostensibly about the views of one of the students, it also served to reveal the teachers' attitudes towards each other's culture and language, and highlighted the complexity of these issues. Mr. Stein finds himself in a particularly ambivalent position. He sees himself at once as an expert on ASL who is in some ways more knowledgeable than his Deaf colleagues, but at the same time feels that, by definition, a hearing person is not qualified to convey the cultural aspects of the language.

In Rob's reported remarks we see the other side of the coin. When he complained to Stein about his poor model of English, he may indeed be expressing his frustration at being faced with ASL when he came to school in order to learn English. He may also be responding to a sense of intrusion into his language and culture by a hearing person. Perhaps for him ASL is what Deaf people do, English is what hearing people do, and in school you practice English grammar, while ASL is reserved only for interpersonal communication. Similar feelings may have sparked the other students' difficulties with Stein's style that we noted in the previous section, (e.g. complaints that he "signed too fast," or "rushed through the coursework", etc.).

Mr. Valdez's compliments to Mr. Stein regarding how he benefitted from his knowledge of ASL belie a possible resentment, also. Valdez said that it was not until he came to Laney and worked with Stein that he, a lifelong signer, studied ASL in a metalinguistic way. He credited Stein with teaching him how to "re-think" his old attitudes about the place of ASL and the place of English, and then minimized the importance of Stein's hearing status ("so you being hearing really isn't that big of a deal."). It is possible that any resentment could not be expressed directly to his hearing co-workers, and the discussion about Rob served as a vehicle to express his own mixed feelings. As the discussions continued, this ambivalence about the place of hearing people was more clearly articulated.

As she watched a videotape of her reading class, Walton said that part of her teaching style was:

> "to take advantage of Carla [Dr. Marsh], as a hearing person who can help out with the vocabulary items I don't know ... the students can see that I, also, have to make use of a hearing person for things I don't know ...".

She then asked Valdez and Stein if they had a similar kind of teaching relationship to that which she had just described. Mr. Valdez responded by saying that he would only confer with other staff on occasion, for instance: "if his signs are older forms that aren't very current". It would not be, he said, "because the hearing staff are above me." Ms. Walton tried to clarify her position by saying "I didn't mean that they were above ..." but Mr. Valdez continued:

> "... the students have been brainwashed into thinking that hearing people always know more, and sometimes they'll question the hearing staff about things that I've already

> gone over with them because they think that they [the hearing staff] have more of a final word on things. The students should believe me when I tell them something. So, sometimes I'll confer, for clarification or to check on something, but that's about it."

Again, at this point, Ms. Walton tried to clarify her original question. She said: "I don't see hearing people as being **above** me, but that we are equals." Valdez argued: "the students could maybe end up feeling in awe of hearing people, and I don't want them to get the wrong idea-- I want them to know that we're all the same." Ms. Walton refuted Valdez's contention:

> "I view it differently", she said, "I present the situation to them as all of us [the students and Walton] being in the same boat together. Both the students and I share a proficiency in ASL and some insecurity about English, and I present the hearing person as someone we can consult, not someone who is above us. They've got their talents and we have ours, it's equal, not that they are superior. I don't think of it that way."

The argument continued, with Valdez adding:

> "I don't want to allow the students to think that the teachers are gods, they've been brainwashed all through school to feel that they are less than the teachers, and I want them to see everyone as equal, to use them as resources ... I want to help change their attitude, to see we're all the same, there's no difference."

Dr. Marsh entered the discussion at this point by saying "that's what's meant by team teaching and team work, [for instance] I'm no good at signing ... that's what I feel being a team means ...". Valdez agreed, saying that "all of us have our different abilities and we share them." Walton said:

> "that's what I was trying to say, when I'm stuck and ask Carla for help and then put it into ASL, the students can see that we're both [them and Walton] not so great at English and it will help them feel better. It makes them realize that there are things we, even as teachers, don't know either, and when they see that Carla and I share our knowledge, they learn to accept that it takes both kinds of knowledge, instead of feeling so negative. It helps them change and realize there are capabilities she has and ones that we have ... and well really that's what bilingual/bicultural is. To teach them how to feel comfortable in a bilingual and bicultural way-- turn the negative block they have into a positive thing. That's what I think."

At this point, Mr. Valdez said he agreed with her.

This discussion highlights the basic differences between Ms. Walton's and Mr. Valdez's feelings about working with hearing people. Ms. Walton assumed more of an integrationist stance, and her remarks reflected a willingness to defer to hearing people's knowledge, at least in the context she was describing. Mr. Valdez, however, expressed quite strongly the idea that it was more critical to instill in his students the belief that Deaf people have answers on their own, independent of hearing people. He was invested in helping students overcome what he saw as years of constantly deferring to the knowledge and authority of hearing people. He seemed to prefer working on his own in his classroom to the kind of relationship that Ms. Walton had with Dr. Marsh.

Another example of Ms. Walton's stance on the issue comes from a different Monday night session. The group was viewing a tape of one of the noon labs where Mr. Stein was helping various students work out some ASL translations of text from their classwork. Ms. Walton smiled warmly and commented that: "it's not only the Deaf teachers who help the students translate into ASL, but the hearing ones too, like Ethan." Ms. Sloan also seemed to share the integrationist perspective. In her interviews she expressed strong feelings concerning the importance of teamwork among the staff:

> "... the beauty of the program is that, for instance, Carla might not have absolutely excellent ASL skills, or I might not, but I get help from Betty, we get help from the Deaf staff and we all collaborate together ... I'm constantly amazed, and I feel like I can only do my job because Betty is here ... I really depend on the Deaf staff to get more information ...".

Generally, in these discussion sessions Mr. Valdez was the one to point out that certain observations could be explained by differences resulting from a staff member's outlook as a hearing or a Deaf person, as in the example of Mr. Stein and the student Rob. Additionally, in another Monday night session when discussing the ways that staff had ranked students' "communication skills," Mr. Stein noted that staff members had little agreement in the way they ranked Tung Tran. Stein said that he always had a difficult time understanding him and was constantly amazed when other staff members could follow him. It was then Mr. Valdez who pointed out that the split in rankings was along Deaf/hearing lines. After that comment Valdez, Wang and Walton discussed how, as Deaf people, their common backgrounds and school experiences might have enabled them to understand Tung more readily.

In another session one of the researchers presented a preliminary analysis of some of the rank order data. He explained that he had run some of the data through a statistical program that showed how much staff members agreed with one another in their rankings. On the question of which students they liked the most, there was a high degree of agreement between Mr. Valdez and Ms. Walton, and also between Dr. Marsh and Ms. Sloan. Mr. Stein showed little agreement with anyone, and Mr. Wang's rankings hadn't been completed yet. When the group began to question why their rankings would cluster in the ways they did, Mr. Valdez, again, was the one to suggest that it might be because he and Walton, as Deaf people, "think in similar ways."

Like Valdez, Mr. Stein tends to confront the Deaf/hearing issues head-on, but the difference between the two seems to be in their emotional proximity to their respective viewpoints. Mr. Valdez pointed out differences between the Deaf and the hearing based in an affective or cultural perspective related to his own experiences and background. Mr. Stein's focus is less personal. He zeroes in on student/teacher expectations around learning English, or for school in general, and argues his ideas about language ownership and association from a more distanced or academic vantage point. For example, Mr. Valdez talked of hearing people being viewed as superior to Deaf people, the importance of common experiences shared by deaf people in school, communication, and even a shared cognition ("... maybe we think in similar ways ..."). Mr. Stein seems to have more of an anthropological or political interest in the issues he raises concerning language and cultural identity. For example, he thought some of the "splits" he observed between Deaf and hearing staff might be resolved by studying them more closely. As he said in his interview: "If we were dealing with [biculturalism] ourselves as an issue, *as a topic of study or inquiry*, that would filter down to the students ...". He also warns that it's "risky business" for a hearing person to try and teach Deaf students about "their" language and its value, emphasizing the cultural identity and political nature that go hand-in-hand with that task.

Just as Mr. Valdez expounded upon the Deaf perspective that he felt was shared by other Deaf staff, Mr. Stein articulated something of a hearing perspective. During one session, the staff had repeatedly observed how the students "don't relate to text," and spent much time discussing possible reasons for the phenomenon. At one point Mr. Stein remarked:

> "... I know that you (Valdez) *understand* English, but when I teach the text is internalized, it's always right there in my head, inside me. With you, when you teach, I think you're more distanced from the English than I am. Maybe you think you're teaching her (a student) the distinction between the signs for "USE" or "USED TO," but really, from what I can see, you're not showing her how to sign it, you're showing her how to interpret, how to understand what's in the text [because you haven't internalized it in the same way as me]."

It was unclear whether the other staff members understood Stein's meta-analysis of the point. Mr. Wang stated clearly that he didn't "catch" what Stein meant, Ms. Walton appeared to follow him, and Mr. Valdez's response was that he was "only human" and not perfect. While watching the videotapes of himself teaching, Valdez said:

> "... I see how I can try and improve ... I appreciate the feedback and sharing with all the other staff ... I value ASL, and of course, English too, but how to teach it to the students, that's a tough one ... I take in Betty's comments, and what Ethan said, but do the students really understand the meaning of a particular English sentence? That question nags at me. How to improve my teaching method ...".

Once again, Ms. Walton confirmed her cooperative position by advocating "working in teams, and observing one another in action" as a way of improving their methods.

In one comment Mr. Stein demonstrated his sense that exploitation and coordination of the staff's individual talents were necessary, and, perhaps unwittingly, established the Deaf and hearing staff members as two groups. He was lamenting the lack of coordination among staff and saying that their goal should be a product of "what each staff member is best at" and "what the students need." He went on to say that this should be at the heart of a bilingual/bicultural approach:

> "... we decide what the students need based on my feeling as whatever I am, a linguist, Carla's feeling as a teacher and linguist, your [Valdez] feeling as a Deaf person, your [Walton] feeling as a Deaf person. Put that all together, as to what they need and we agree on it. And you guys understand her [Marsh's] perspective as a product of her background, understand mine as a product of my background, we understand yours, we all take that in and agree. Then we go ahead and teach based on what I can do, based on what you can do, and your strengths ...".

In his choice of pronouns ("... *we* understand *yours* ...), Stein effectively demonstrated a sense of the separateness of Deaf and hearing staff's perspectives and talents.

Through a statement made during the final Monday night session, Stein again contended that Deaf and hearing perspectives are distinct from one another. The group had been discussing a class they had just viewed where Valdez, Walton and Stein were working together to teach students how to sign a written "sentence" of glossed ASL signs. In the original lesson plan, they were supposed to go through it sign by sign. The way it turned out in class was that Walton and Valdez taught it as a whole sentence. In trying to account for why the two deviated from the staff's agreed upon plan, Stein suggested that "maybe it was natural for Carla and I to want to break the sentence down into words and teach it that way because of our instincts as hearing users of a linear language like English. Maybe for you guys (Valdez and Walton) that just wasn't natural."

It is perhaps not surprising that most instances of disagreement or discussion about hearing versus Deaf issues were concerned with language. Language is at the heart of cultural identity, and cultural groups tend to guard their language boundaries with great vigor. While the Deaf and hearing staff of *DeafCAN* worked closely and well together, underlying differences in perspective tended to be revealed when they discussed language issues, allowing us to get an insight into their interrelationships that may not have been otherwise possible.

What is the *DeafCAN* Way?

A large part of the essence of the *DeafCAN* program is incorporated in the elements discussed above. The *DeafCAN* way involves Deaf culture, bilingualism/biculturalism, and a family environment, but it is also defined by what goes on in the classroom. Some of the most remarkable kinds of interaction we observed in the *DeafCAN* classrooms involved various kinds of collaborations between and among students and teachers. One such phenomenon occurred when a student temporarily took control of the class. In other words a student would spontaneously get up, go to the front of the class, and take over from the teacher. Although sometimes in classes students were solicited by teachers to come to the front of the room in order to answer a question or tell a narrative, these *takeovers* were distinctive events because the students' action was unsolicited by the teachers. Typically, the student would proceed either to elaborate on a point just made by the teacher, offer examples demonstrating a concept, or describe their understanding or interpretation of the material being covered.

Traditionally, the front of the classroom is the locus of authority or control, and is dominated by the teacher. The *DeafCAN* teachers, however, were always quite ready to step aside and let the student have the floor and/or direct the class. We have already reported several examples of this phenomenon in the teacher and student profiles, but there were others: For example, during one math class, staff members were lecturing to students and discussing with them the concept of even and odd numbers. In the middle of the discussion, one student came to the front of the room and began to explain in his own words how even/odd numbers fit together, and that one must "jump by two." The staff members stand by and look on, allowing the student to complete his explanation and return to his seat. In an early December session of the computer class, Mr. Wang was lecturing on the parts of a computer system and how they function "like a brain." Class members were struggling to understand the concept when one student came to the front of the room, took the teacher's position, and explained to his peers how the CPU (central processing unit) of a computer functions as a brain. Even when Mr. Wang stepped back toward the center of the class, the student remained, acting like a teacher with his classmates, explaining, answering and posing questions. For a brief time, Wang and this student were almost like co-teachers. Later in the same class, when Wang was lecturing about computer "logic," another student first articulated her understanding of the idea, then, when it was not clear enough for her satisfaction, she came to the front of the room and illustrated what she meant, using the blackboard to demonstrate her point. Again, Mr. Wang made way for the student to

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say her piece. During one math class, while the staff were conducting a word problem discussion, two different students at different times took it upon themselves to go to the front of the room, take over the teaching role, and provide examples of extenuating circumstances related to the problem. They then stayed at the front to help conduct the class.

The list of examples is very long. However, despite the fact that these events occurred across classrooms, students, and teachers, they were marked by the same features: students either shared the place of authority with the teacher, or replaced the teacher for a brief period of time; the students' actions took place during the middle of a lecture or discussion; the students acted spontaneously, unbidden by the teacher; the teacher always allowed this to happen; the students were displaying their own understanding of a point, often explaining it to their classmates in a way that suggested they could improve on the teacher's performance; students sometimes appeared to use this as a way of thinking out loud or clarifying an idea for themselves.

There are a number of possible reasons why this pattern might have developed. The most likely, perhaps, is the non traditional balance of power between students and teachers that existed in the *DeafCAN* program. As the teachers themselves stated in different ways at different times: "We are not god here." This attitude was reflected in their willingness to allow students to share control of the class and participate fully in all class proceedings. It is possible that the more even balance of power in *DeafCAN* classes was a result of the fact that the students and most teachers had Deafness in common. They shared minority language and culture status, which may have served to equalize the control dynamics in the classroom. Another possibility is that the relative inexperience of many of the staff members may have made them feel less sure of themselves, and hence less ready to assert the power that traditionally accompanied the role of teacher. Another factor that may also have been operating alongside either of these explanations concerns the pragmatics of communication in a visual language. At meetings in the Deaf community, for example, it is a common practice for speakers to come to the front of the room so that their comments are easily visible to everyone. It may be an extension of this cultural practice when students come to the front of the class. In addition, this custom is explicitly practiced in *DeafCAN* when students tell a narrative or have a comment to make, although they will often simply stand up at their desks, rather than coming to the front of the room. The "pragmatics" issue, however, only explains the license to stand before the class, not the motivation, or the attendant change in the balance of control.

A second phenomenon we observed throughout the year was the degree to which almost all the students engaged in the *spontaneous tutoring* of each other. This was accomplished in a number of ways. Sometimes students would *re-interpret* material being presented by the teacher to make it more accessible. This most often, although not exclusively, occurred in Dr. Stubbs' class. For example, at the end of one of his Deaf Culture classes, he gave an assignment to his students based on what they had just been working on. Confusion followed, with many of the students unclear as to the nature of the assignment or how to go about doing it. One student commanded the attention of her study group and explained to them the assignment as she understood it. In another session of that class one student was unable to follow Stubbs' lecture. She turned to her classmate who then *interpreted* for her several times during the course of the lecture in a way that made the information accessible.

After the influx of new students in the second semester, we observed spontaneous tutoring between the old and new students. Students who had started the program in the fall semester would take it upon themselves to coach the newer students on concepts, protocols or assignments that they had already become familiar with. Additionally, in the labs and classrooms, they would tutor new students who seemed a little green or who were having difficulty with the coursework or ideas in lectures. For example, in an early February session of the math lab, both Lisa Corazon and Linda Walker spent a considerable amount of time spontaneously helping two of the new students with the protocol in the workbook, going over problems, and offering support. In Ms. Walton's reading class when they were focusing on translating from English text into ASL signs using the glossing system introduced earlier, there were numerous instances of spontaneous peer tutoring, particularly from Rosa Gomez to Jean Ramirez. When Rosa, or the other students got the hang of a translation, they were quick to turn to Jean or other slower students, and explain it to them, or otherwise help them out. This practice seemed to filter down to newer or less experienced students as time went on. Even Jean, who so often had been the recipient of her peer's assistance, adopted this routine when, in a spring session of the lab she went over to one of the new students and began, unbidden, to help her with what she was working on.

During a spring meeting of Ms. Walton's reading class, while Walton was describing the ambiguities of English with the sample sentence, "they killed the cat with the knife," Rosa got up and took over the class. She stayed at the front of the room with Ms. Walton, explaining to her peers exactly *how* she knew what the sentence meant, then took special care to make sure that classmate Bobby Brandon, in particular, was able to understand her point. Throughout the rest of this class session, several other students engaged in peer tutoring of their own volition. In addition, the more experienced students were seen to help the new students translating the short plays into ASL. Still later on, the behavior was adopted by one of the newer students when she assumed the role of tutor to Tung Tran. This new student attempted to help Tran articulate his thoughts about the plays, using much the same style exhibited by other students during this type of peer tutoring.

In one of Mr. Stein's English classes, the students were going over their responses to some multiple choice questions related to a reading from the textbook. When one student could not seem to understand why his answer was wrong, another student took over the discussion, and, in the manner of a teacher, presented the student with a sort of challenge intended to help him think. The problem question concerned the concept of ancestors, and the student acting as teacher asked the other student, "what does the word ancestor mean to you?" When he was unsure, she then explained the meaning of the word for him while the rest of the class (and Mr. Stein) looked on, and then she chastised him for not knowing the meaning of the word (since it was central to the lesson). Later on, she tutored him again. One of Mr. Valdez's assignments was to write a reaction paper to a movie about a person who was part computer and part human. When one of the new students had a question about the assignment, a second new student clarified: "write about what you think it might feel inside ...", and then proceeded to try to explain and help her understand. When Ms. Walton was going over vocabulary items from the reader and the class was working on definitions and translations for the words, Jean Ramirez defined a word for Bobby Brandon, and then took it upon herself to help him figure out the sign equivalents for the English word. As they proceeded, Jean continued to help/tutor Bobby, under the endorsement of Ms. Walton.

The of intricate helping network that we witnessed among the students in the *DeafCAN* classes and labs was pervasive to a degree we felt was unusual in a community college setting. One might be able to attribute the origins of such behavior to the kinds of school experiences that are typical for many Deaf students. Often Deaf students find themselves unable to understand their teachers because of inadequate signing, and a presumed knowledge of English grammar and semantics. This is an experience often reported by Deaf adults, by the students we interviewed, and by other students in the program. In these situations, students who do understand often interpret for those who do not. It is also true that the "nurturing" and "family-like" environment talked about by both students and staff may foster this kind of mutually supportive behavior on the part of the students.

The student takeovers and the tutoring are both examples of what we might call *collaboration*. In our effort to define "the *DeafCAN* way", we might begin with this generalization. Much of what goes on in the classrooms can be typified as being collaborative work and learning between students and staff. It involves the teachers relinquishing power to the students when they demand it, and the students exercising initiative and responsibility for their learning by taking control, and tutoring their peers when they feel it is called for. The roles between teachers and students become blurred, and this is accentuated by the fact that the teachers see themselves as learners. The end result is an overriding sense of collaboration that is fundamental to what we will call the *DeafCAN* way.

There are other characteristics that contribute to the essence of the program. For instance, *DeafCAN* classes are *student-centered*. Furthermore, the staff employ a team approach to teaching which is manifested in different ways by different combinations of staff members for various class sessions. By "student-centered" we mean that teachers focus their activities on the students' needs rather than their own. That is, they adjust their style to use student knowledge, experience, and input as a starting point for classroom instruction. This is in contrast to a *transmission* model of teaching that views the teacher as the source of knowledge, and the student as a vessel into which this knowledge must be transmitted. As we have already noted, the teachers in this program seem to make a habit of soliciting student input on a concept or skill they are about to teach before offering their own ideas. They try to make what they teach relevant to the students' own experiences, attempting to facilitate new learning rather than impart information.

Often, more than one teacher was present in class. The manner in which the teachers interacted varied a good deal, showing the flexibility in their concept of team teaching. One manifestation was to be found in Dr. Stubbs' classes, where, as we have seen, Ms. Walton and Mr. Valdez often served as assistants. Their function was generally to carry out tasks which were a part of Stubbs' lesson plan, or to illustrate or demonstrate a point or concept after he had introduced it in a lecture. Another version of the concept of team was found in the relationship between Ms. Walton and Ms. Sloan during their Orientation to College class. There, each teacher's weaknesses were complemented by the others' strengths, and, as a result, they worked together as a true team. Dr. Marsh, however, often served as the mentor or master teacher of other staff members. In other situations, for example when Mr. Stein and Ms. Walton paired up to teach combined English classes, or Ms. Walton, Mr. Valdez, and Mr. Wang combined forces to lead the word problem discussions in the math class, the teachers worked together to combine their ideas, or supply an alternative approach mid-stream during a class, when something was not working well. Sometimes, all or nearly all of the staff members would teach together for special sessions of classes where all the groups would convene. This occurred when they created a medieval "mead hall" to complement the History of English reader, complete with costumes, "mead," and Mr. Stein's dramatic sign language rendition of Beowulf. Another time, all of the teachers except Mr. Wang created a skit to highlight the differences between ASL and English, including a part where they tried to "teach" sign language to an android (Mr. Stein), with the help of the students.

In addition to these various combinations, there was also intermittent cooperation among staff as they taught their classes alone. For example, Ms. Walton often made use of Mr. Stein's or Dr. Marsh's expertise in English by calling them over to her class to help out for a short time during a lesson. In all its manifestations, the team approach to teaching was fundamental to the *DeafCAN* Way, and also reflective of the collaborative nature of the program.

Two organizational and administrative aspects of the program are also characteristic of *DeafCAN*. The first is connected to the general lack of time for organization of the curriculum and program. The staff constantly seemed to be working under time pressure, resulting in what was referred to by Dr. Marsh as "under the gun" planning. Because of the shortage of full-time permanent positions, opportunities for curriculum and administrative organization were few. The fall semester began without a fully realized curriculum, and the reading curriculum for the spring semester was conceived and written by Dr. Marsh while she was at home recuperating from surgery during the winter.

Many staff members complained about the lack of time to do serious curriculum planning or to resolve difficulties they faced in their classrooms. As we have seen, often teachers would grab time between classes to address these issues, or they would deal with them in passing, or on the telephone after hours. As Dr. Marsh recounted to us, the program had always been operated on a sort of moment-to-moment basis. Marsh described the staff's willingness to function in such an environment as being something of a survival strategy: "I guess if they did not [do things this way] they could not have survived, along with the rest of us." It appears that a certain solidarity and sense of team spirit was born from this manner of operation. As Dr. Marsh said: "They may have to do job X when they planned to do job Y, but *that's why we're a team*, is that people are willing to look at it and do whatever they have to do." The lack of cohesion in organizing the program, and the "do or die" atmosphere exacted a price, however. Teachers, interpreters and aides who had been hired only as part-time workers by the college were routinely laid off when the number of part-time hours they had been allotted for work were expended. This was a constant impediment to the operation of a consistent, full-time program and curriculum, in addition to being a drain on staff morale and energy. By the beginning of the second semester, many of the staff were feeling disheartened about the program-- most notably Ms. Sloan and Mr. Stein. They appeared burned-out by the lack of support, either financial or bureaucratic, from the administration. Mr. Stein was frustrated by constantly having to deal with administrative red tape and the struggle to keep the program afloat without enough support or full-time staff. He said, sadly, that with all of these things demanding his attention, "teaching the students is always the last thing."

In addition *DeafCAN* is also defined to some extent by its lack of solid or sufficient funding. "More money," "more positions," "more of everything," "more rooms," "more equipment"-- these are the needs reiterated by staff who have not only learned how to carry on without them being fulfilled, but whose ways of coping with the shortages have stylized *DeafCAN* into the kind of program it is. Perhaps part of the so-called *DeafCAN* Way is the chaos and camaraderie created by the staff operating in an atmosphere that deprives them of what they feel they need to function efficiently. It is not possible to determine what is cause and what is effect. However, the lack of funding, the lack of permanence, and the lack of time for planning and organizing appear to be as much a part of the program's essence as are the collaborative work and learning by students and staff that we observed in the classrooms.

These insights together paint a more complete picture of the *DeafCAN* Way. In summary, *DeafCAN* is a function both of the underlying philosophy inherent in the perspectives of the participants, as well as the constraining financial and administrative environment in which it finds itself. On the one hand, the staff and students gravitate toward collaborative and cooperative work and learning, possibly reflecting sociological patterns typical in Deaf culture. On the other hand, the program must operate under a set of conditions that, at times, serve to generate a sense of solidarity and team spirit, but at others often demoralize teachers and deplete their energy, thus prohibiting the realization of the program's full potential. These influences combine to produce a complex world view that influences all aspects of the program. The end result is the *DeafCAN* Way.

CHAPTER SIX

Epilogue

In this chapter we update the reader on the changes that have taken place with the *DeafCAN* staff, students and program since the end of the 1988-89 year. The information contained here was obtained from interviews with Dr. Marsh and other staff members, and letters from students telling us about their lives over the last year and a half.

The *DeafCAN* Staff

Wilbert Wang continued to teach math for two more semesters, in his capacity as an hourly worker. Mr. Wang was hired in the fall of 1990 by another local community college with a large Deaf student population as a full-time math instructor. Dr. Marsh said that, although she deeply regretted losing Mr. Wang, particularly after five years of helping to train him as a new teacher, she applauded the idea of a Deaf person with a Master's degree being given his due--a full-time job with benefits. She added, "...it's *DeafCAN's* loss, but the movement's gain, so to speak."

David Stubbs left the program and moved to a small coastal California city in the summer of 1989. He was employed as a sign language teacher at a community college there for a short time and then moved to Washington, D.C. where he currently resides. He works as a full-time, tenured drama instructor at Gallaudet University. Dr. Marsh says that they "drop each other postcards," and that Dr. Stubbs appears to be "doing well."

Jennifer Sloan is still working as the counselor for disabled and Deaf students at Laney College. As of May, 1990, Ms. Sloan was supposed to be released from her other duties in order to be assigned full-time to Deaf Services as a counselor specifically for Deaf students. Although negotiations to make this happen have been underway for some time, and another part-time counselor was hired to take over Ms. Sloan's other commitments, she is currently doing "the same amount of work at the same pay" according to Dr. Marsh, without having the release time she was promised. Dr. Marsh finds this situation "frustrating all around," and negotiations are still taking place. Ms. Sloan got married in the summer of 1990, and is talking about taking "a year or more" off work beginning next year to have a baby.

Ethan Stein has continued to work full-time in the program, officially as its "Program Specialist." Over the last year he has focused mostly on a collective teaching effort with Mr. Valdez and Ms. Walton. He plans to leave the program after December, 1990 to go to Africa and work with the school for the Deaf and the local Deaf community in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Betty Walton has continued teaching in the program over the last year and a half as a volunteer. She will complete her Master's degree in Deaf Education in December, 1990, earning both a Master's and a secondary school teaching credential. She will leave *DeafCAN* to begin her student teaching practicum at another school in the spring of 1991. Ms. Walton would like to teach in the *DeafCAN* program, but there are no positions available for her.

Roy Valdez has continued in his capacity as an hourly worker. During the 1989-90 school year, in addition to his teaching duties, he also functioned as the coordinator for Deaf Services, managing interpreter schedules and other student services. Most recently Mr. Valdez interviewed and was hired for a full-time permanent position as an instructional aide in the *DeafCAN* program. According to Dr. Marsh, Mr. Valdez has made great strides in his skills as a teacher, working closely with Mr. Stein and Ms. Walton over the last year.

Carla Marsh has continued to function in dual roles as a coordinator and teacher for both the Project Bridge and the *DeafCAN* programs. She bemoans the fact that she "still has no boss" and that despite all of the work from many people that has gone into the development of the program over the years, *DeafCAN* still has no official place in the college's organizational framework. Most recently, Dr. Marsh has been released from other duties for an extra six hours each week to coordinate for *DeafCAN*. She was teaching five classes before gaining the release time, and in addition to normal coordination activities, had to find a math teacher to replace Mr. Wang, and contend with the instructional aide position (now filled by Mr. Valdez) that had opened up. Dr. Marsh said that, after twenty-four years as an English teacher, she's "finally learning how to teach." Through experiences she's had with students in the programs over the last year she's learned to "de-center" herself from academic English. She explained, "...I realized I could no longer ask these people [the students] to come to the institution. I would ask them to use the institution, to be in it, and take from it what they could, but it was clearly my job to move toward them...I was always a student-centered teacher, but I found out that I wasn't student-centered enough, so I made a new jump in that way."

The *DeafCAN* Students

Rosa Gomez is currently continuing her studies in the *DeafCAN* program. In the semester following our observation, she moved up into Mr. Stein's section of the reading class. In the following semester Rosa endured personal difficulties because of the October, 1989 San Francisco earthquake and "family problems" that forced her to drop out of the program temporarily. Now, after three years, she is the "star student" in the *DeafCAN* program, according to Dr. Marsh. With her personal life more under control, Dr. Marsh says she is really "here with both feet" and will be ready to mainstream into Project Bridge classes in the upcoming semester. She still speaks often about being a teacher, but Dr. Marsh doesn't know if she is in a stable enough position economically and domestically to make that feasible.

Linda Walker continued in the program for another year after we observed her and then told the staff that she would not be returning for the following fall (1990) semester, because she needed to find a job so that she could become independent from her parents and move out of their house. Linda left *DeafCAN* and joined a job training program. She appears to be "doing well."

According to Ms. Sloan, despite Ms. Walton's assessment of Tung Tran's improvement recorded in our observations, one year later the staff decided that Tung was not making any progress at all in the reading and writing classes, and was not ready to move to the next level. He did enter Mr. Wang's math and computer classes, but ultimately he was referred to a local sheltered workshop, a half-way house for developmentally disabled Deaf people, and the Lion's Blind Center. After being told that he would not be able to continue in the English classes in *DeafCAN*, Tung registered to attend a local city college English class. After this, according to Dr. Marsh, Tung "drifted around in the most tragic of ways." He kept returning to the program looking for Mr. Wang, seemingly not understanding that Wang no longer worked there. He refuses to pursue any of the work that he's been referred for at sheltered workshops and continues to "wander."

Hon Hueng continued to study in *DeafCAN* classes, and during the time that's passed since our observation of him, staff members have reported that Hon has mentioned suicide more than once. This notwithstanding, he moved up into Project Bridge classes in the fall semester of 1990. Currently he is taking an electronics and a biology class. Dr. Marsh describes him as doing "as little work as possible on all fronts" and feels that it is connected to a "bad self-image." In his letter to us, Hon made no mention of difficulty and described his interest and excitement in learning about electronics.

Despite the encouraging progress that Jean Ramirez seemed to be making in the program during our observations of her, she quite suddenly and abruptly quit the program in the beginning of the Spring, 1989 semester. She reportedly became very upset during a class, for reasons that none of the staff was able to determine, and left the campus. She did not want to return despite the staff's efforts to encourage her to come back or even talk about what had happened. Ms. Sloan said that throughout her time in the program Jean had suffered from stress about being in school, and a fear of failing because she believed she was "stupid." Ms. Sloan said Jean suffered from migraines from this internalized pressure and that the "last straw" came during a class when she was "made" to act out something in class that had "embarrassed" her. During her next class session, which was with Mr. Stein and Ms. Walton, Jean told Ms. Walton that she "couldn't follow" what Stein was saying and when Walton told her to ask him to repeat it, Jean felt embarrassed and didn't want to. Ms. Walton began, then, to interpret it for her, and Jean apparently took this as confirmation of her stupidity and felt humiliated. This was when she left the class (and school) in tears. Despite the progress observed by her teachers and by us, according to Ms. Sloan, Jean was unable to transcend her own sense of herself as a "failure," and could no longer tolerate the pressure that being in school seemed to cause. Ms. Sloan contacted both her and her husband to try and get her to come back to school, or at least come in to her office to talk about it, but up to now she has refused. Most recently Jean has enrolled in a computer training program to learn how to do data entry. She has yet to talk with anyone from the program about exactly what happened and why she left.

Steve Atkins completed the Fall, 1989 semester following our observation and then began classes in Project Bridge in spring of 1990. He dropped out of school after one month in Bridge, ostensibly because of work schedule problems and to attend to a relationship with a former Laney student who had dropped out of the program when she became pregnant. He has returned to the college for the current Fall, 1990 semester. Dr. Marsh reports that he's doing "great writing" in Project Bridge classes and working hard in all of his classes.

In the semester following our observation David Li transferred completely into Project Bridge classes at Laney. Currently he is in a mainstream biology class at the college and no longer participates in *DeafCAN* or Bridge classes. He receives tutoring for his mainstream class out of the Deaf Services office, housed in the *DeafCAN* offices, and still visits there socially from time to time.

Toward the end of the year of observation Bobby Brandon was seeing a psychotherapist and began taking medication that was apparently interfering with his ability to function in school. He had begun taking printing classes at the college and during a budget crunch, when interpreting services were cut back, he was having difficulties getting interpreters for his classes. This predicament seemed to exacerbate his frustration with school, and his disruptions and behavior in *DeafCAN* classes had become increasingly difficult for staff to deal with. At about the time he was going to be asked to leave the program, according to Ms. Sloan, he left on his own, "in a huff." He has not been seen by anyone in the program since.

After our observations Lisa Corazon transferred into Mr. Stein's reading class, and Dr. Marsh's writing class. Dr. Marsh felt that she would have been ready to transfer into the Project Bridge classes the following (Spring, 1990) semester. As it turned out, the next semester Lisa's family moved to a town an hour south of the college. Lisa commuted to Laney and finished out the semester. She told staff members that she "really wanted to continue at Laney" but that the commute was too much for her and she decided not to return the following (Fall, 1990) semester. Currently she is "doing well" in mainstream classes at a local community college near her family's home. She says that she likes mainstream classes, feels she's making progress, and is happy not to have to commute any more.

One semester after our observation, Eric Ching left *DeafCAN* to attend another local community college serving Deaf students for a year. He returned to attend Project Bridge classes at the beginning of the Fall, 1990 semester. According to Dr. Marsh, he "works like a dog," and of all of the students she sees, appears to be doing the best. He is in a mainstream biology class, two Bridge classes, is excited about being in school, and wants to go to Gallaudet University for the Spring, 1991 semester. In his letter to us Eric said that English was taught in too traditional and "boring" a way at the other local college and that he wanted to return to Laney to work on his English. He said that he'd like eventually to teach math and computers to elementary school Deaf children.

The Program

Programmatic changes were made over the last year and a half at both ideological and organizational levels. The three reading class sections were collapsed into one group, taught collectively by Mr. Valdez, Mr. Stein, and Ms. Walton. Further, the curriculum, texts and materials were changed. Dr. Marsh wrote a new text for the class about Deaf and American hearing culture. It's written in the form of short plays, reminiscent of the text used by Ms. Walton in her classes during our observation three semesters ago. These readings are then supplemented by the signed stories of former students which were videotaped, glossed into ASL, and written in English. The stories, which served as curricula for the reading classes several years ago, are now being recycled and used as illustration of the concepts in the plays.

The writing class has also been collapsed into one group and is taught by Dr. Marsh with "team support" from Ms. Walton, Mr. Stein, and Mr. Valdez. Marsh didn't want to break the group up because she doesn't believe in tracking students according to ability levels and feels that everyone "has something to offer everyone else." She sees the class as being "more academic, more structured," and gives almost identical assignments to the Deaf writing classes as she does to her hearing students in the Project Bridge classes. Dr. Marsh said that she felt she'd learned a lot about how to effectively "transition" people--from entry level *DeafCAN* to exit level *DeafCAN*, from entry level Bridge to exit level Bridge--and she sees the new structure of the writing class as a way to help the Deaf students make the transitions more smoothly. She says the staff have come to recognize that students must know how to do some very specific tasks. In order to "make the transitions work," the staff continue to maintain a student-centered attitude, but, additionally, have begun to concentrate on the specific skills needed to make transitions to higher levels successful. They include doing problem-solving in a group, learning how to do revisions of their writings, and how to find multiple meanings in words. Marsh sees the next step as focusing on the best ways to move students from exit level Bridge into the mainstream college classes, and to that end offers a study skills class in Bridge that teaches both hearing and Deaf class members how to be assertive students with hearing mainstream teachers.

The Deaf Culture class is no longer offered because there's no one available to teach it, and the program is unable to add any new classes into the schedule because there are no funds to support them.

The Women's Peer Support Group is still functioning on a weekly basis. Although it "fell apart" a bit during the Spring, 1990 semester, that was only a brief hiatus, and it is now meeting regularly with the new group of students from the current semester.

The math class and lab have basically the same structure but are being taught by a new instructor, hired as an hourly worker, to replace Mr. Wang.

The daily lab functions in much the same way as it did, except that students are requested to eat lunch **before** the lab and not during it now, in an effort to create a more "serious" atmosphere for the students. Dr. Marsh says the students attend the lab "religiously."

No further classes have been added to the program because the "administrative structure is so unstable."

The admissions procedure to the program has been changed to make it closer to the general college's standards. An ESL test known as the SLEP has been adapted to make it accessible to Deaf students. The test's written component remains the same as what is taken by hearing foreign students entering the college. The oral portion has been translated into ASL on videotape. *DeafCAN* now administers the test to entering students and uses their scores to determine their placement into *DeafCAN*, Bridge, or mainstream classes. Dr. Marsh feels that using the same test as the rest of the college will provide students with more accessibility to its programs, as well as helping to standardize *DeafCAN's* own admissions procedure.

Another change in admissions criteria concerns the staff's definition of "reasonable progress." They have become "more cautious" about taking in students that they have doubts about admitting. In the past, being able to sign, and wanting to be in school were the main criteria for admission to *DeafCAN*. According to Dr. Marsh, the staff now make it clear to "borderline" students from the very beginning that they must make reasonable progress in order to continue in the program beyond the first semester, so that "Tung Tran won't happen again." Dr. Marsh says that they've learned that the program operates best when it has about twelve students. However, the program is faced with a catch-22 because it can't continue with student numbers that low, yet they can't accommodate the needs of more students without the staff and support that they are currently being denied.

The program has been functioning over the last year with many fewer students than it had during our observation period. Initially, it was a conscious decision not to admit any new students for one semester and use that time as a kind of practicum to hone the teaching skills of tutors and instructional aides (Mr. Valdez and Ms. Walton). During that semester, feedback and critiques of staff teaching styles were provided by Dr. Marsh in order to improve the quality of teaching and also help standardize it across staff members within the program. She feels that this was time well spent and it seems to have contributed to a shared sense of responsibility for the teaching task among staff. The following semester, the program did not recruit any new students because of continued administrative difficulties and instability. With only six students in attendance in the current semester's reading class, Mr. Stein and Mr. Valdez are in charge. Comments from both of them indicate they like the arrangement and feel that they complement one another's teaching styles.

The administrative hassles and lack of support that have plagued the program from the beginning still continue, although some change has occurred. The full-time staff position filled by Mr. Valdez represents the first instance of a Deaf person obtaining an instructional aide position with benefits. However, the math and computer classes are still being taught by a Deaf teacher hired on an hourly worker basis. Although Dr. Marsh was released from other duties to provide her with six more hours for coordinating *DeafCAN*, she still has no institutional support for her work or the program itself. The problem is similar for Ms. Sloan. Although she was to be granted release time to work as the full-time counselor for *DeafCAN*, the administration scrapped the idea because *DeafCAN* doesn't have enough students currently to justify the move. As described earlier, the reason they don't have enough students is because they can't appropriately accommodate more students without more staff and support for the program, which they are continually denied.

The concepts of bilingualism and biculturalism are being realized in slightly different ways, according to Dr. Marsh. In the classwork, students now do a lot more comparative work between ASL and English at the **discourse** level, rather than just at the sentence level as they used to. For example, the students practice how one goes about creating a detailed description of something in ASL and then how it's done in English, in addition to the sign/word or sign/phrase level of comparison previously used in classes. The concept of a "hearing American culture" is introduced in the new reading curriculum materials created by Dr. Marsh, and the recycled student stories being used in the classes. Dr Marsh tried to address cultural issues more directly in the Project Bridge study skills class that was integrated with Deaf and hearing students, and found that the "directness didn't really work." However, she said that the hearing Bridge teacher and other hearing students do mix in class, and integration happens of its own accord, even though she no longer tries to address the cultural issues overtly.

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